



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

• Riverside Literature Series •

LAMB'S
Essays of Elia
Selected

Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

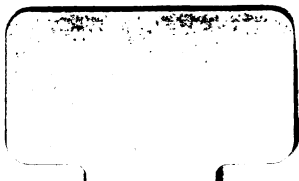
T 848. 560.460



Harvard College Library

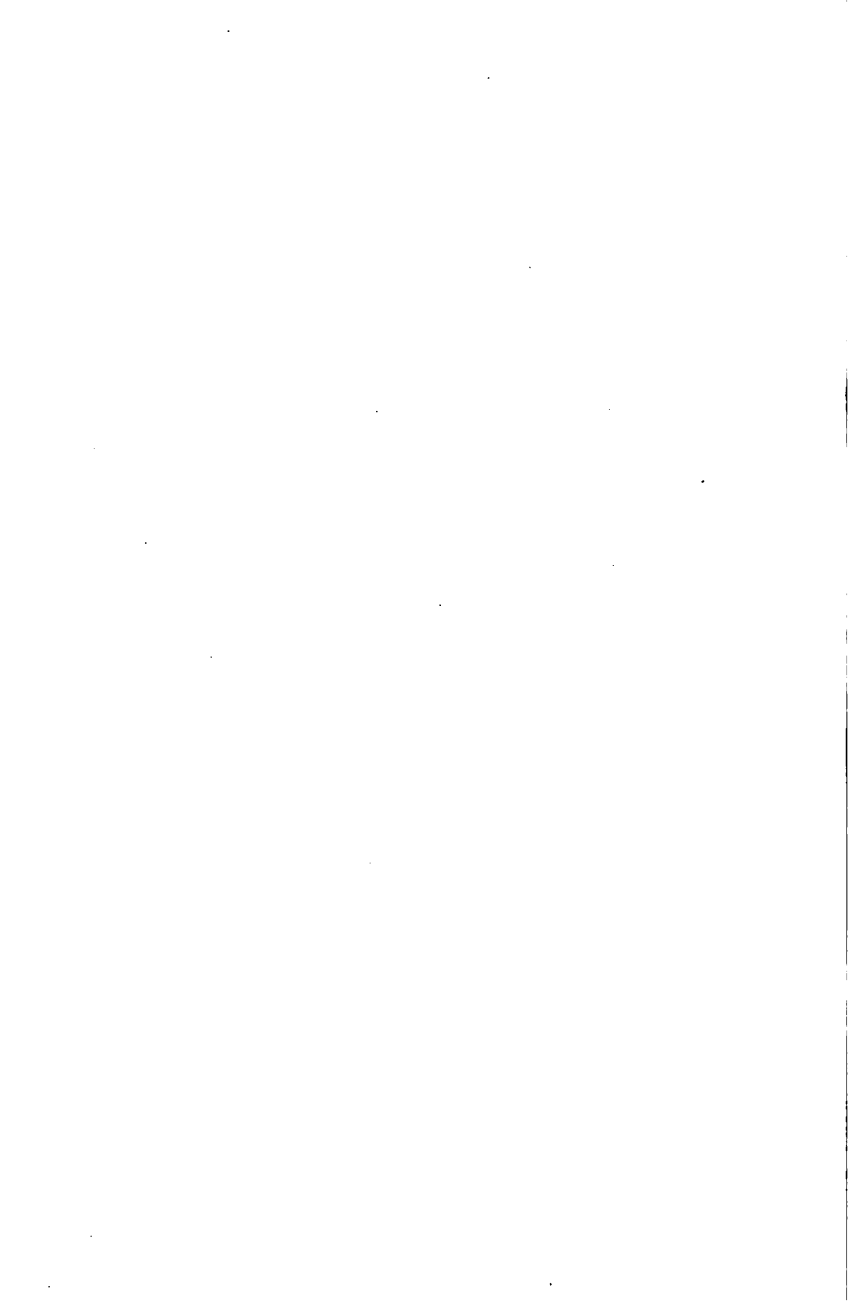
FROM

.....
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT LIBRARY
.....





3 2044 097 048 706





Chamb.

The Riverside Literature Series

THE ESSAYS OF ELIA

BY

CHARLES LAMB

SELECTED

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, BIBLIOGRAPHY,
AND NOTES



HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

Boston: 4 Park Street; New York: 85 Fifth Avenue

Chicago: 378-388 Wabash Avenue

The Riverside Press, Cambridge

Faint handwritten text at the top left, possibly "Faint T" and "No. 460".



*Manuscript -
Educational Department Library
27 June, 1907.
Harvard University,
Dept. of Education Library,
Gift of the Publishers.*

COPYRIGHT 1907 BY HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CONTENTS

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	v
BIBLIOGRAPHY	xxi
THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE	1
CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO	12
MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST	30
A CHAPTER ON EARS	40
WITCHES, AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS	47
VALENTINE'S DAY	56
MY RELATIONS	60
THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE	69
GRACE BEFORE MEAT	84
DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE	93
DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS	99
THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS	107
A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG	117
BLAKESMOOR IN H—SHIRE	127
POOR RELATIONS	134
STAGE ILLUSION	143
SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS	148
THE SUPERANNUATED MAN	152
OLD CHINA	162
POPULAR FALLACIES	
That a Man must not Laugh at his own Jest	170
That the Worst Puns are the Best	170
That We must not Look a Gift-Horse in the Mouth	173
That Home is Home though it is never so Homely	176
That We should Rise with the Lark	182
That We should Lie Down with the Lamb	185
NOTES	189

CHARLES LAMB

THAT period of English literature which began with the end of the eighteenth century and ended with the beginning of the second third of the nineteenth was one of great significance. It saw the full development of romantic poetry in the writings of the Lake Poets, and of romantic fiction in the novels of Scott; it heard a note of genuine realism in the stories of Jane Austen; it gave birth to the revolutionary poetry of Byron and Shelley; it compassed the whole of the life of Keats, lover and creator of beauty; it ushered in a brilliant group of essayists, Hazlitt, Jeffrey, Wilson, Lamb, De Quincey, Leigh Hunt, Landor, who, in the pages of the young reviews, aroused a fresh and a critical interest in literature. Among these last, the most interesting personality, perhaps, was that of Charles Lamb, the "gentle Elia." To know Lamb is to know the whole group; for his letters and essays are full of allusions to them all, and in their writings no name is spoken more often or more lovingly than his. "The most beloved of English writers may be Goldsmith or may be Scott," says Swinburne, "but the best beloved will always be Lamb."

Charles Lamb was born February 10, 1775, in the Temple, on the banks of the Thames in London; and in London or its immediate neighborhood he lived all his days. The most perfect description of his early home and of his father we may read in his essay, *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple*. Of three children who survived infancy Charles was the youngest, and his name is forever indissolubly knit with that of his sister Mary, ten years older than himself. His earliest book learning came from a certain Mr. Bird, whose school admitted boys in the day and girls in the evening.

Lamb's
Birth,
1775, and
Education

"Oh, how I remember our legs wedged into those uncomfortable sloping desks," wrote Lamb in 1826, "where we

sat elbowing each other; and the injunctions to attain a free hand, inattainable in that position; the first copy I wrote after, with its moral lesson, 'Art improves Nature;' the still earlier pot-hooks and the hangers, some traces of which I fear may yet be apparent in the manuscript." Considering the poverty of the family, it was great good luck for Lamb, when eight years old, to be removed to Christ's Hospital, where he remained for the next seven years. His own words are again the best record we have of these years,—in *Recollections of Christ's Hospital* and *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*. Here began that memorable friendship with Coleridge, "the poor friendless boy," who used to steal away from the playground to read Vergil by himself. Coleridge's picture of the "Blue Coat School," as given in his *Biographia Literaria*, and Hunt's description of it as it was three years later, should be read, as giving with Lamb's an all-round impression of this famous English school. Hunt speaks in his sketch of Lamb's "pensive, brown, handsome and kindly face," and of his Quaker-like dress that distinguished him through life. According to his own statement Lamb gained here the rank of deputy Grecian,—the next to the highest; but an impediment in his speech seems to have prevented his obtaining an "exhibition" to the university.

At fifteen Lamb left school to help in the support of his family. To understand the home conditions to which he returned we need only read as biography *Mackery End in Hertfordshire* and *My Relations*. The elder brother, John, earning a good salary, living by himself and indulging his artistic tastes, troubled himself little with the needs of his family. Mary was to share with Charles all the anxieties of supporting and protecting a helpless mother and invalid father. A dark shadow rested upon them all in the inherited taint of intermittent insanity which appeared in different forms in all the children,—both a memory and an expectation that darkened their happiest moments. But the brother and sister found solace in their common love of books, and in an occasional visit to their grandmother's country home at Blakesware,

Lamb's
Early
Home

where carved woodwork, faded tapestries, and tangled gardens awakened all that love of beauty that breathes in the essay on *Blakesmoor in H——shire*.

Sometime during the next two years Lamb obtained a humble position in the South-Sea House. Of his service here we have no more exact account than the shadows of facts which we find in the first of the papers signed "Elia." Strangely enough, no letter or bit of writing by Lamb exists dated

Connection
with the
South-Sea
House

earlier than 1795. In April, 1792, he obtained a better position in the East India Company, and in their service he remained the rest of his working days. In this year of his promotion a small legacy was left to the family by Samuel Salt, in whose office Lamb's father had served for years as scrivener.

Connection
with the
East India
Company

This generous friend is appreciatively described by Lamb as S. in the essay on the *Old Benchers*; and the "spacious closet of good old English reading" into which *Mackery End* tells us that Mary Lamb was "tumbled early to browse at will upon a fair and wholesome pasturage" was, without doubt, his library. This bequest, with Lamb's own salary, and the little which Mary earned by sewing, seems to have been sufficient for the maintenance of their quiet home in Little Queen Street, Holborn.

The greatest pleasures of these days were the occasional visits from Coleridge, now a student at Cambridge. At "The Salutation and the Cat," he and Lamb spent long evenings in discussing their favorite writers, and dreaming of the time when they, too, should be "authors in print." Coleridge was already writing verse for *The Morning Chronicle*, and in his first volume, published by Cottle of Bristol, in 1796, Lamb printed four sonnets of his own. "The effusions signed 'C. L.' were written by Mr. Charles Lamb of the India House" may still be read in the preface of this edition. In these sonnets we may find, if we will, stray touches of the early romance of Lamb's life,—enough to gather that he gave his heart's love to his "fair-haired maid," while he was forced to give his devotion and support to the needs of

Friendship
with
Coleridge

his family. Perhaps he feared, also, his own inherited share of the family malady. One attack seems to have come upon him already, for in one of his earliest letters to Coleridge, 1796, he writes: "The six weeks that finished last year and began this, your very humble servant spent very agreeably in a mad house at Hoxton. I am got somewhat rational now, and don't bite any more. But mad I was!"

The same year proved to be the most tragic in the family history of the Lamb. Mary, temporarily deranged by overwork, took the life of her mother. No one has written half so delicately of the awfulness of the calamity as Lamb himself to Coleridge: "My poor, dear, dearest sister, the unhappy and unconscious instrument of the Almighty's judgment on our house, is restored to her senses; to a dreadful sense and recollection of what has past, awful to her mind and impressive (as it must be to the end of life), but tempered with religious resignation and the reasonings of a sound judgment, which, in this early stage, knows how to distinguish between a deed committed in a transient bit of frenzy and the terrible guilt of a mother's murder." The rest of the letter shows the steady courage and dutiful care which from now on marked Lamb's affection for his sister. The mania never returned upon him; but Mary was to suffer recurring attacks as long as she lived. One of the saddest pictures in all literature is that drawn for us by Charles Lloyd, who on one occasion met the brother and sister, "slowly pacing together a little footpath in Hoxton fields, both weeping bitterly; and found on joining them, that they were taking their solemn way to the accustomed asylum."

In 1797 Lamb became the lonely companion of his father, during whose lifetime he had decided that Mary should not return home. Books were now his greatest solace. He read and loved the old English writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "preferring *by-ways* to highways." "I gather myself up unto the old things," he was always saying, and his dictum, "when a new book comes out, I read an old one," has passed into history. His love for Beaumont, Fletcher,

**Tragedy of
Mary
Lamb's
Life**

**Lamb's
Love of
Reading**

Massinger, Walton, and Browne was later to be reflected in the quaintness of his own constructions and diction. Yet was he not disdainful of the authors of his own day. Anything that was a book, he said, he could read. And so we find him actually enjoying Southey's juvenile attempt, *Joan of Arc*, even while he is leading the van in admiration of Burns and Wordsworth. His next venture in authorship was a contribution of poems to a second volume of Coleridge's, published under the title of *Poems by S. T. Coleridge, to which are now added Poems by Charles Lamb and Charles Lloyd*. A review of the day characterized Lamb's contributions as "plaintive," and well they might be, dealing entirely with his own sad past. They brought their author little profit; and because of his anxiety to add to his scanty salary, he wrote, in 1798, the story called *The Tale of Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret*. This little romance is almost as well worth reading as the essays, delightfully delicate, and weaving in many characteristic allusions to all Lamb's old favorites from Walton to Burns. To this year also belong the exquisite lines on *The Old Familiar Faces*. Coleridge, Lloyd, and Southey were now his closest friends, and, as Canon Ainger points out in his biography of Lamb, it was through these friendships, more than through his own early writings, that Lamb was feeling his way to his place in literature.

After the death of his father in 1799, and the return of Mary from the hospital, Lamb, feeling that he and his sister were "marked" in their old home, takes lodgings again in the Temple, close to the home of his boyhood. "By my new plan," he writes, "I shall be as airy up four pairs of stairs as in the country, and in a garden in the midst of enchanting (more than Mahomedan paradise) London, whose dirtiest Arab-frequented alley and her lowest-bowing tradesman I would not exchange for Skiddaw, Helvellyn, James, Walter, and the parson into the bargain. O! her lamps of a night! her rich goldsmiths, print shops, toy shops, mercers, hardware men, pastry cooks, St. Paul's churchyard, the Strand, Exeter Change, Charing Cross with the man

upon the black horse! . . . All the streets and pavements are pure gold, I warrant you. At least, I know an alchemy that turns her mud into that metal—a mind that loves to be at home in crowds.” In the heart of all this that he loved, he lived, with occasional changes of lodgings, for the next eighteen years.

The few years following saw many experiments in writing. For a short time Lamb played the rôle of joke-contributor to several daily papers. *Newspapers Thirty-Five Years Ago* tells us of the agony of concocting these quips two hours before breakfast each day. “Half a dozen jests in a day,” he says, “why, it seems nothing; we make twice the number every day in our lives as a matter of course. . . . But then they come into our heads. But when the head has to go out to them, when the mountain must go to Mahomet!” Later he is busy putting into verse prose

Failure of versions of German poems furnished him by
Lamb's Coleridge; in this way he hoped to make £50
First Plays extra a year, and so “live in affluence.” To prove, however, that he meant finally to devote himself to more serious work, Lamb submitted to Coleridge, in 1799, a drama entitled at first *Pride's Cure*, afterwards *John Woodvil*. Contrary to the advice of both Coleridge and Southey, he sent the play to John Kemble, manager of Drury Lane Theatre, only to receive word nearly a year later that the manuscript had been lost. He furnished a second copy, but a personal interview with Kemble ended in its being refused. Lamb published it, nevertheless, in 1802. The play is chiefly interesting to us now as evidence of the abandon with which the author yielded himself to the influence of the Elizabethan dramatists. In 1806 the proprietor of Drury Lane accepted Lamb's farce, *Mr. H.* When acted, it was a complete failure. At the first and only performance the curtain fell amid hisses, in which Lamb himself is said to have joined. But his courage in the face of these failures seems indomitable. He writes to Hazlitt, “Mary is a little cut at the ill success of *Mr. H.*, which came out last night and failed. I know you'll be very sorry, too, but never mind. We are determined not

to be cast down. I am going to leave off tobacco, and then we must thrive. A smoky man must write smoky farces."

In his next undertaking Lamb was more fortunate. This was doing, for William Godwin, twenty of Shakespeare's plays into stories for children. His sister helped him in this work, writing herself the comedies and leaving to her brother the tragedies. In a letter of hers we read: "Charles has written *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and has begun *Hamlet*. You would like to see us as we often sit writing on one table, but not on one cushion like Hermia and Helena in *Midsummer Night's Dream*; rather like an old literary Darby and Joan, I taking snuff, and he groaning all the while and saying that he can make nothing of it, which he always says till he has finished, and then he finds out that he has made something of it." The *Tales from Shakespeare* came out in January, 1807, and were a success at once. No one probably knew the plays better than these two joint-authors, and to their accuracy of detail they added that simple, narrative style which has made their version beloved by young and old. The *Tales* still hold their own as the most sympathetic introduction young people can have to the reading of Shakespeare. Godwin next asked Lamb to translate for children the story of the *Odyssey*; and this was quickly followed, in 1808, by a more scholarly work for which Lamb was eminently fitted, — *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Contemporary with Shakespeare*. In this labor Lamb struck a new note in criticism; for his comments concerned themselves little with antiquarianism and philology, and became rather studies of human life as reflected in these early dramas. His preface says: "The plays which I have made choice of have been with few exceptions those which treat of human life and manners. . . . My leading design has been to illustrate what may be called the moral sense of our ancestors." If Lamb's notes pass over rather indifferently the points of construction and characterization in the drama, they are, on the

*Tales from
Shake-
speare,
1807*

*Specimens
of English
Dramatic
Poets,
1808*

other hand, a long leap ahead toward genuine appreciation of the knowledge of human life which is the foundation of all dramatic power; more than that, they were a powerful factor in reviving the works of the older dramatists, which English readers at that time had well nigh forgotten. "He flashed a light from himself upon them."

During the next few years Lamb wrote but little,—one collection of stories, one of poetry for children, and one or two pieces of criticism published in Leigh Hunt's *Reflector*. In 1817 he had left the old home in the Temple for lodgings in Great Russell Street, on the site where once stood Will's Coffee-House. His worldly fortunes were now looking upward. His salary at the East India House was constantly increasing. The friends who invaded his home became so numerous that he says in his whimsical way, "I am never C. L. but always C. L. and Co. He

First Edition of Collected Works, 1818 who thought it not good for man to be alone preserve me from the more prodigious monstrosity of being never by myself." This round of conviviality was doubtless the reason why eight years showed so little literary work accomplished. In 1818 a complete collection of his writings was brought out. Writing to Coleridge, Lamb laughs at the "slender labours" dignified by the title of "Works," and says, "You will find your old associate in his second volume dwindled into *prose* and *criticism*!" Not yet did he know that the world was in the end to love him best as an essayist.

Lamb's admiration for the gifted comedian, Fannie Kelly, brings us in 1819 to an episode whose history, read in detail, contributes much to our affection for him. In 1818 he had written to her a sonnet in whose last lines genius nobly celebrated genius:—

Your tears have passion in them, and a grace
Of genuine freshness, which our hearts avow;
Your smiles are winds whose ways we cannot trace,
That vanish and return we know not how—
And please the better from a pensive face
And thoughtful eye, and a reflecting brow.

In the *Examiner* Lamb was writing frequent criticisms of her acting, and a fortnight after his praise of her perform-

ance of Rachel in *The Jovial Crew*, — in which Miss Kelly's wit must have detected more warmth than belongs to even the most enthusiastic appreciation, — he sent her his formal proposal of marriage. "As plainly and frankly as I have seen you give or refuse assent in some feigned scene, so frankly do me the justice to answer me," he wrote. Her sincerity met his; and with her kind, firm refusal and Lamb's brave reception of her decision, the romance ended. But the old friendship remained unmarred as long as Lamb lived. Nothing is more lovable or noble in him than the habitual quietness with which he accepted such defeats. Of the suffering which they meant to him we can only catch glimpses here and there in the reveries and retrospects of his essays, or the confidences of his letters. In *Dream Children* we may read a memory of his love for the "fair-haired maid" of the early sonnets; and in *Barbara S.* we have an affectionate portrayal of one of the pathetic instances in the childhood of Fannie Kelly.

In August, 1820, Lamb contributed to the *London Magazine* an essay entitled *Recollections of the South-Sea House*, and signed the article *Elia*. This pen name he borrowed from an Italian fellow-clerk in the South-Sea House, one Elia. Possibly the name has never been pronounced as Lamb expected, for in a letter to J. Taylor, dated July 30, 1821, he says, referring to himself as Elia, "call him *Ellia*." In 1823 the *Essays of Elia*, which had appeared in the magazine at the rate of one almost every month from August, 1820, to December, **Essays of Elia, 1823** were collected into a single volume. They were twenty-five in all, showing a variety of theme and mood, and an apparently careless grace that has been the admiration and despair of all who have tried since to imitate them. No one has ever been able to write like *Elia* simply because there has been but one Charles Lamb; and as we read we become unconsciously more interested in the essayist than in the essays. They have been aptly described as an "incomparable, amphibian result, which is half a Single Personality and half a Unique Literature, — *Elia* and the *Essays of Elia*."

In 1822 we find Lamb writing to Wordsworth, "I grow ominously tired of office confinement. Thirty years I have served the Philistines and my neck is not subdued to the yoke. You don't know how wearisome it is to breathe the air of four pent walls without relief, day after day, all the golden hours of the day between ten and four, without ease or interposition." A summer vacation in Paris gave him a welcome interposition, however; but strangely enough not a word of his French experiences appears in his essays. What he might have written is suggested by a letter to his sister instructing her what Paris sights she must see. One sentence there reads: "Then there is a place where the Paris people put all their dead people, and bring them flowers and dolls and gingerbread-nuts and sonnets and such trifles;" and in another letter he speaks characteristically of the Seine as "exactly the size to run through a magnificent street."

The next year Lamb, for the first time, tries country life in quiet Dalston, where, freed from his "harpy-friends," he hopes to be able to write in uninterrupted seclusion. From here he sends word to Bernard Barton: "When you come Londonward, you will find me no longer in Covent Garden. I have a cottage in Colebrook Row, Islington; a cottage, for it is detached; a white house with six good rooms; the New River (rather elderly by this time) runs (if a moderate walking pace can be so termed) close to the foot of the house; and behind is a spacious garden with vines (I assure you), pears, strawberries, parsnips, leeks, carrots, cabbages, to delight the heart of old Alcinous. You enter without passage into a cheerful dining-room, all studded over and rough with old books; and above is a lightsome drawing-room, three windows, full of choice prints. I feel like a great lord, never having had a house before." At this time he contributed a few papers to the *London Magazine*, which was then seeing its last days, and in which Lamb says he felt like a rat lingering among creaking rafters. The irksomeness of his office labors becomes stronger and stronger, but although he signifies to the East India Company his wish

to resign, nothing happens. "I am sick of hope deferred," he writes. . . . "I have a glimpse of freedom, of becoming a gentleman at large, but I am put off from day to day. I have offered my resignation, and it is neither accepted nor rejected. Eight weeks am I kept in this fearful suspense." But at the end of March, 1825, his withdrawal was accepted, and an annual pension of more than half his salary was allowed him. *The Superannuated Man* is a fairly exact account of this long-looked-for consummation. "Here I am," he writes to Wordsworth in a few days, "after thirty-three years' slavery, sitting in my own room at eleven o'clock, this finest of all April mornings, a freed man, with £441 a year for the remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who outlived his annuity, and starved at ninety." Occasionally Lamb had misgivings as to the wisdom of his decision; and he even spent one homesick day at his old desk, almost regretting that he had deserted his companion clerks. But his philosophy was, "A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him Nothing-to-do; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative." Some regular work, it is true, he still undertook, working at the British Museum from ten until four, making extracts from the collection of Elizabethan plays left to that institution by Garrick; but this enterprise shows a waning of the enthusiasm with which he had prepared his *Dramatic Specimens* twenty years before. A surer sign of his decreasing interest in life, however, appears in his confession that London no longer stimulates and interests him. "The streets, the shops, are left," he writes, "but all old friends are gone. . . . When I took leave of our adopted friend at Charing Cross, 't was heavy unfeeling rain, and I had nowhere to go. Home I have none, and not a sympathising house to turn to in the great city. Never did the waters of heaven pour down upon a forlorn head. . . . I got home on Thursday, convinced that I was better to get to my home in Enfield" (whither he

Lamb's
Withdrawal
from the
East India
Company

had moved in 1827), "and hide like a sick cat in the corner."

In 1830 Lamb published his *Album Verses*, and in 1831 he wrote for *The Englishman's Magazine* some prose fragments under the heading of *Peter's Net*. In

Last Essays of Elia, 1833 1833 the *Last Essays of Elia* closed the list of his writings. The next year Coleridge, the

"archangel, a little damaged," as Lamb once called him, died; and in all the expression which Lamb gave to his grief he wrote nothing truer than that this friend was the "proof and touchstone" of all his cogitations. In some sense this bereavement was Lamb's death-blow. Coleridge and his own sister Mary stood closer to him than any one else in the world. The sister's infirm-

Death of Coleridge ity had increased during the years until a greater part of her days had to be spent in confinement; and Lamb had turned to Coleridge more appealingly than ever. For weeks after the blow, even in the midst of the brightest company, he was often heard to say, as if lost in thought, "Coleridge is dead." In December

Death of Lamb, 1834 a fall and a slight gash upon his face resulted in an illness which his weakening health could not combat. Before the end of the month, December, 1834, Lamb had passed away and was buried in Edmonton churchyard in the place where he had told his sister he wished to lie.

Of all the tributes paid to Lamb two written by Wordsworth are worth reading again and again. The first, better as a characterization than as poetry, written the year after Lamb's death, begins as follows:—

Wordsworth's Tributes to Lamb

"To a good Man of most dear memory
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart
From the great city where he first drew breath,
Was reared and taught; and humbly earned his bread,
To the strict labours of the merchant's desk
By duty chained. Not seldom did those tasks
Tease, and the thought of time so spent depress
His spirit, but the recompense was high;
Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful sire;
Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air;
And when the precious hours of leisure came,

Knowledge and wisdom, gained from converse sweet
 With books, or while he ranged the crowded streets
 With a keen eye, and overflowing heart;
 So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,
 And poured out truth in works by thoughtful love
 Inspired — works potent over smiles and tears.
 And as round mountain-tops the lightning plays,
 Thus innocently sported, breaking forth
 As from a cloud of some grave sympathy,
 Humour and wild instinctive wit, and all
 The vivid flashes of his spoken words.
 From the most gentle creature nursed in fields
 Had been derived the name he bore — a name
 Wherever Christian altars have been raised,
 Hallowed to meekness and to innocence;
 And if in him meekness at times gave way,
 Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,
 Many and strange, that hung about his life;
 Still, at the centre of his being, lodged
 A soul by resignation sanctified:
 And if too often, self-reproached, he felt
 That innocence belongs not to our kind,
 A power that never ceased to abide in him,
 Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins
 That she can cover, left not his exposed
 To an unforgiving judgment from just Heaven.
 Oh, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived!

The second, written in the same year, is a beautiful remembrance of both Coleridge and Lamb: —

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
 From sign to sign, its stedfast course,
 Since every mortal power of Coleridge
 Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
 The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth:
 And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
 Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Mary Lamb, "that Madonna-like lady," as De Quincey called her, outlived her brother twelve years. At her death Crabb Robinson, their faithful friend, wrote, "She will live forever in the memory of her friends as one of the most amiable and admirable of women." The mutual devotion of this brother and sister is one of the most beautiful relations remembered in literature. If we give full value to their natural tie of kinship, their common memory of early sufferings endured together, their congenial tastes, and their almost religious consecration to each other's good, we

Death of
 Mary
 Lamb,
 1846

can even then hardly appreciate the strength of the bond that united them. The following lines in a letter from Charles Lamb to Miss Wordsworth in June, 1805, express this relationship most touchingly. "Your long kind letter has not been thrown away . . . but poor Mary, to whom it is addressed, cannot yet relish it. She has been attacked by one of her severe illnesses, and is at present *from home*. Last Monday week was the day she left me, and I hope I may calculate upon having her again in a month or so. . . . Meantime she is dead to me, and I miss a prop. All my strength is gone, and I am like a fool, bereft of her co-operation. I dare not think, lest I should think wrong; so used am I to look up to her in the least and biggest perplexity. To say all I know of her would be more than I think anybody could believe or even understand. . . . She is older and wiser and better than I, and all my imperfections I cover to myself by resolutely thinking of her goodness. . . . I know she has cleaved to me for better, for worse; and if the balance has been against her hitherto, it was a noble trade."

We are prone to pigeon-hole people, and the world has long filed Charles Lamb with the jokers and punsters of literature. It would be hard to draw him thence and label him anew *Lamb the Philosopher*, and yet he has a certain right to be thus re-christened. Intellectual strength is nothing more than the ability to look straight at a thing, at a myriad of things; to think one's own independent thought about them; and never to tire of thinking and judging.

Lamb's Intellectual Strength This is the attitude that makes for intellectual righteousness, and this attitude was Lamb's. With an imagination, a sentiment, a love of revery, a depth of feeling which could easily have mesmerized his mind into gentle lethargy, he was still mentally wide awake. Every quality of intellect was alive in him, — energy, keenness, justness, precision. All these we might expect in his critical writings; but they are easily found in the *Essays of Elia*, where every word is the precise, first-hand truth about something; and even more easily in the *Letters*, where they are less concealed by con-

scious expression. Lamb's own friends looked up to him as an intellectual master. They loved the quips of his wit and the cranks of his humor not more than they admired the range and force of his thought and trusted the rightness of his judgments. Perhaps we are slow to appreciate this aspect of Lamb's greatness because his whole personality takes us so by storm that we forget to analyze it into its parts; perhaps Lamb himself has taught us to expect from him only the playful and fanciful. Hazlitt imputed Lamb's puns to humility, as if he had more profound things to say than he liked to venture in earnest, and so preferred the friendly cover of nonsense. In this case all his fun would be but the offspring of intellectual strength and activity, — a point of view it is only just to consider.

It was inevitable that the real character of Charles Lamb should be often a matter of discussion. When a man devoutly voices the wish that the last breath he draws may be "through a pipe and exhaled in a pun," a hundred serious people will arise to call him trifler. Or when he stands always ready-cocked with a joke that can sting as well as tickle, those who wince under his wit may rightfully resent his favorite form of conversational humor. When Coleridge, referring to his days in the Unitarian ministry, asked, "Charles, did you ever hear me preach?" and Lamb replied, "I never heard you do anything else," he might feel a bit uncomfortable at the retort that came so near hitting the truth. Often, too, it seemed as if a spirit of perverseness impelled Lamb to show himself, especially among strangers, at his worst. Among those whom he impressed unfavorably was Carlyle, who, as of course he would, thought his conversation "contemptibly small" and a "ghastly make-believe of wit." Like many a sensitive nature Lamb was at his best with those he loved best. To them the "quivering sweetness" of his face, the lines that stood for suffering, sympathy, and deep thought, the soft twinkle of his eyes, and the inexpressible sadness of his smile spoke of a nature which they knew as full of oddities and contradictions, but at the same time fine, sincere, gentle, and

strong of purpose. In the preface to the *Last Essays of Elia* we read lines which are doubtless Lamb's analysis of his own personality. There he says: "My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him: and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. . . . Few understood him, and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself." But those of us who know Lamb through his writings know him only to love him; for those works are "of all modern literature," as Talfourd says, "most immediately directed to give us heart's-ease and make us happy." And to many of us his reconciliation to life is a more convincing argument for good than the polemics of a strenuous reformer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Lucas, E. V., *Life of Charles Lamb*.
 (Editor), *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*. 7 vols.
- Talfourd, T. N., *Life and Letters of Charles Lamb*.
Final Memorials of Charles Lamb.
Literary Sketches and Letters.
- Ainger, A., *Charles Lamb* (English Men of Letters).
 (Editor), *Letters of Charles Lamb*.
 (Editor), *Essays of Elia*.
- Fitzgerald, P., *Charles Lamb; his Friends, his Haunts, and his Books*.
- Hazlitt, W., *The Lambs; their Lives, their Friends, and their Correspondence*.
Mary and Charles Lamb; Poems, Letters, and Remains.
- De Quincey, T., *Biographical Essays*.
- Dobell, B., *Sidelights on Charles Lamb*.
- Clarke, Mr. and Mrs. Cowden, *Recollections of Writers* (a few pages devoted to Lamb).
- Stoddard, R. H. (Editor), *Personal Recollections of Lamb and Others*.
- Barry Cornwall, *Charles Lamb, a Memoir*.
- Mrs. Gilchrist, *Mary Lamb* (Famous Women Series).
- Martin, E. B., *In the Footprints of Charles Lamb* (a sort of topographical biography, fully illustrated).
- The best short account of Lamb's life and works is that written by Mr. William Macdonald as an Introduction to Dent's edition of the complete works of Lamb.
- The following contain frequent interesting allusions to Lamb:
 X Fields, J. T., *Yesterdays with Authors* (chapter on Barry Cornwall).
- Hazlitt, W., *Table Talk*.
Spirit of the Age.
- Pater, W., *Appreciations*.
- Gilfillan, G., *Literary Portraits*.
- Hutton, L., *Literary Landmarks of London*.
- Hunt, Leigh, *Autobiography*.
- Patmore, P. S., *My Friends and Acquaintances*.
- Southey, C. C., *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*.
- Wilson, J., *Noctes Ambrosianae*.
- Cottle, J., *Early Recollections of Coleridge*.



THE ESSAYS OF ELIA

THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE¹

READER, in thy passage from the Bank² — where thou hast been receiving thy half-yearly dividends (supposing thou art a lean annuitant like myself) — to the Flower Pot,³ to secure a place for Dalston, or Shacklewell,⁴ or some other thy suburban retreat northerly, — didst thou never observe a melancholy looking, handsome, brick and stone edifice, to the left — where Threadneedle Street abuts upon Bishopsgate? I dare say thou hast often admired its magnificent portals ever gaping wide, and disclosing to view a grave court, with cloisters, and pillars, with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out — a desolation something like Balclutha's.*

This was once a house of trade, — a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here — the quick pulse of gain — and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticos; imposing staircases; offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces — deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks; the still more sacred interiors of court and committee rooms, with venerable faces of beadles, door-keepers — directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend) at long worm-

* "I passed by the walls of Balclutha, and they were desolate."

eaten tables, that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt-leather coverings, supporting massy silver ink-stands long since dry ; — the oaken wainscots hung with pictures of deceased governors and sub-governors, of Queen Anne,⁵ and the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty ;⁶ — huge charts, which subsequent discoveries have antiquated ; — dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams, — and soundings of the Bay of Panama ! — The long passages hung with buckets, appended, in idle row, to walls, whose substance might defy any, short of the last, conflagration : — with vast ranges of cellarage under all, where dollars and pieces of eight once lay, an “unsunned heap,”⁶ for Mammon⁷ to have solaced his solitary heart withal, — long since dissipated, or scattered into air at the blast of the breaking of that famous BUBBLE. —

Such is the SOUTH-SEA HOUSE. At least, such it was forty years ago, when I knew it, — a magnificent relic ! What alterations may have been made in it since, I have had no opportunities of verifying. Time, I take for granted, has not freshened it. No wind has resuscitated the face of the sleeping waters. A thicker crust by this time stagnates upon it. The moths, that were then battenning upon its obsolete ledgers and day-books, have rested from their depredations, but other light generations have succeeded, making fine fretwork among their single and double entries. Layers of dust have accumulated (a superfœtation of dirt !) upon the old layers, that seldom used to be disturbed, save by some curious finger, now and then, inquisitive to explore the mode of book-keeping in Queen Anne’s reign ; or, with less hallowed curiosity, seeking to unveil some of the mysteries of that tremendous

HOAX, whose extent the petty speculators of our day look back upon with the same expression of incredulous admiration, and hopeless ambition of rivalry, as would become the puny face of modern conspiracy contemplating the Titan size of Vaux's superhuman plot.⁸

Peace to the manes of the BUBBLE! Silence and destitution are upon thy walls, proud house, for a memorial!

Situated as thou art, in the very heart of stirring and living commerce,—amid the fret and fever of speculation—with the Bank, and the 'Change, and the India-house about thee, in the hey-day of present prosperity, with their important faces, as it were, insulting thee, their *poor neighbour out of business*—to the idle and merely contemplative,—to such as me, old house! there is a charm in thy quiet:—a cessation—a coolness from business—an indolence almost cloistral—which is delightful! With what reverence have I paced thy great bare rooms and courts at eventide! They spoke of the past:—the shade of some dead accountant, with visionary pen in ear, would flit by me, stiff as in life. Living accounts and accountants puzzle me. I have no skill in figuring. But thy great dead tomes, which scarce three degenerate clerks of the present day could lift from their enshrining shelves—with their old fantastic flourishes, and decorative rubric interlacings—their sums in triple columniations, set down with formal superfluity of cyphers—with pious sentences at the beginning, without which our religious ancestors never ventured to open a book of business, or bill of lading—the costly vellum covers of some of them almost persuading us that we are got

into some *better library*, — are very agreeable and edifying spectacles. I can look upon these defunct dragons with complacency. Thy heavy, odd-shaped ivory-handled penknives (our ancestors had everything on a larger scale than we have hearts for) are as good as any thing from Herculaneum. The pounce-boxes of our days have gone retrograde.

The very clerks which I remember in the South-Sea House — I speak of forty years back — had an air very different from those in the public offices that I have had to do with since. They partook of the genius of the place!

They were mostly (for the establishment did not admit of superfluous salaries) bachelors. Generally (for they had not much to do) persons of a curious and speculative turn of mind. Old-fashioned, for a reason mentioned before. Humorists, for they were of all descriptions; and, not having been brought together in early life (which has a tendency to assimilate the members of corporate bodies to each other), but, for the most part, placed in this house in ripe or middle age, they necessarily carried into it their separate habits and oddities, unqualified, if I may so speak, as into a common stock. Hence they formed a sort of Noah's ark. Odd fishes. A lay-monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house, kept more for show than use. Yet pleasant fellows, full of chat — and not a few among them had arrived at considerable proficiency on the German flute.

The cashier at that time was one Evans, a Cambro-Briton.⁹ He had something of the choleric complexion of his countrymen stamped on his visage, but was a worthy sensible man at bottom. He wore his hair,

to the last, powdered and frizzed out, in the fashion which I remember to have seen in caricatures of what were termed, in my young days, *Maccaronies*.¹⁰ He was the last of that race of beaux. Melancholy as a gib-cat¹¹ over his counter all the forenoon, I think I see him, making up his cash (as they call it) with tremulous fingers, as if he feared every one about him was a defaulter; in his hypochondry ready to imagine himself one; haunted, at least, with the idea of the possibility of his becoming one: his tristful visage clearing up a little over his roast neck of veal at Anderton's¹² at two (where his picture still hangs, taken a little before his death by desire of the master of the coffee-house, which he had frequented for the last five-and-twenty years), but not attaining the meridian of its animation till evening brought on the hour of tea and visiting. The simultaneous sound of his well-known rap at the door with the stroke of the clock announcing six, was a topic of never-failing mirth in the families which this dear old bachelor gladdened with his presence. Then was his *forte*, his glorified hour! How would he chirp, and expand, over a muffin! How would he dilate into secret history! His countryman, Pennant¹³ himself, in particular, could not be more eloquent than he in relation to old and new London — the site of old theatres, churches, streets gone to decay — where Rosamond's pond¹⁴ stood — the Mulberry Gardens¹⁵ — and the Conduit in Cheap¹⁶ — with many a pleasant anecdote, derived from paternal tradition, of those grotesque figures which Hogarth¹⁷ has immortalised in his picture of *Noon*, — the worthy descendants of those heroic confessors, who, flying to this country, from the wrath of Louis the

Fourteenth¹⁸ and his dragoons, kept alive the flame of pure religion in the sheltering obscurities of Hog Lane, and the vicinity of the Seven Dials !¹⁹

Deputy, under Evans, was Thomas Tame. He had the air and stoop of a nobleman. You would have taken him for one, had you met him in one of the passages leading to Westminster Hall.²⁰ By stoop, I mean that gentle bending of the body forwards, which, in great men, must be supposed to be the effect of an habitual condescending attention to the applications of their inferiors. While he held you in converse, you felt strained to the height²¹ in the colloquy. The conference over, you were at leisure to smile at the comparative insignificance of the pretensions which had just awed you. His intellect was of the shallowest order. It did not reach to a saw or a proverb. His mind was in its original state of white paper. A sucking babe might have posed him. What was it then ? Was he rich ? Alas, no ! Thomas Tame was very poor. Both he and his wife looked outwardly gentle-folks, when I fear all was not well at all times within. She had a neat meagre person, which it was evident she had not sinned in over-pampering ; but in its veins was noble blood. She traced her descent, by some labyrinth of relationship, which I never thoroughly understood, — much less can explain with any heraldic certainty at this time of day, — to the illustrious but unfortunate house of Derwentwater.²² This was the secret of Thomas's stoop. This was the thought — the sentiment — the bright solitary star of your lives, — ye mild and happy pair, — which cheered you in the night of intellect, and in the obscurity of your station ! This was to you instead of riches, instead of

rank, instead of glittering attainments: and it was worth them altogether. You insulted none with it; but, while you wore it as a piece of defensive armour only, no insult likewise could reach you through it. *Decus et solamen.*²³

Of quite another stamp was the then accountant, John Tipp. He neither pretended to high blood, nor in good truth cared one fig about the matter. He "thought an accountant the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest accountant in it."²⁴ Yet John was not without his hobby. The fiddle relieved his vacant hours. He sang, certainly, with other notes than to the Orphean lyre.²⁵ He did, indeed, scream and scrape most abominably. His fine suite of official rooms in Threadneedle Street, which, without anything very substantial appended to them, were enough to enlarge a man's notions of himself that lived in them, (I know not who is the occupier of them now) * resounded fortnightly to the notes of a concert of "sweet breasts," as our ancestors would have called them, culled from club-rooms and orchestras — chorus singers — first and second violincellos — double basses — and clarionets — who ate his cold mutton, and drank his punch, and praised his ear. He sate like Lord Midas²⁶ among them. But at the desk Tipp was quite another sort of creature. Thence all ideas, that were purely ornamental, were banished. You could not speak of anything romantic without

* I have since been informed that the present tenant of them is a Mr. Lamb, a gentleman who is happy in the possession of some choice pictures, and among them a rare portrait of Milton, which I mean to do myself the pleasure of going to see, and at the same time to refresh my memory with the sight of old scenes. Mr. Lamb has the character of a right courteous and communicative collector.

rebuke. Politics were excluded. A newspaper was thought too refined and abstracted. The whole duty of man consisted in writing off dividend warrants. The striking of the annual balance in the company's books (which, perhaps, differed from the balance of last year in the sum of £25 1s. 6d.) occupied his days and nights for a month previous. Not that Tipp was blind to the deadness of *things* (as they call them in the city) in his beloved house, or did not sigh for a return of the old stirring days when South Sea hopes were young — (he was indeed equal to the wielding of any the most intricate accounts of the most flourishing company in these or those days) : — but to a genuine accountant the difference of proceeds is as nothing. The fractional farthing is as dear to his heart as the thousands which stand before it. He is the true actor, who, whether his part be a prince or a peasant, must act it with like intensity. With Tipp form was everything. His life was formal. His actions seemed ruled with a ruler. His pen was not less erring than his heart. He made the best executor in the world : he was plagued with incessant executorships accordingly, which excited his spleen and soothed his vanity in equal ratios. He would swear (for Tipp swore) at the little orphans, whose rights he would guard with a tenacity like the grasp of the dying hand, that commended their interests to his protection. With all this there was about him a sort of timidity — (his few enemies used to give it a worse name) — a something which in reverence to the dead, we will place, if you please, a little on this side of the heroic. Nature certainly had been pleased to endow John Tipp with a sufficient measure of the principle of self-preservation.

There is a cowardice which we do not despise, because it has nothing base or treacherous in its elements ; it betrays itself, not you : it is mere temperament ; the absence of the romantic and the enterprising ; it sees a lion in the way, and will not, with Fortinbras, “ greatly find quarrel in a straw,”²⁷ when some supposed honour is at stake. Tipp never mounted the box of a stage-coach in his life ; or leaned against the rails of a balcony ; or walked upon the ridge of a parapet ; or looked down a precipice ; or let off a gun ; or went upon a water-party ; or would willingly let you go if he could have helped it : neither was it recorded of him, that for lucre, or for intimidation, he ever forsook friend or principle.

Whom next shall we summon from the dusty dead,²⁸ in whom common qualities become uncommon ? Can I forget thee, Henry Man, the wit, the polished man of letters, the *author*, of the South-Sea House ? who never enteredst thy office in the morning or quittedst it in mid-day (what didst *thou* in an office ?) without some quirk that left a sting ! Thy gibes and thy jokes are now extinct, or survive but in two forgotten volumes,²⁹ which I had the good fortune to rescue from a stall in Barbican,³⁰ not three days ago, and found thee terse, fresh, epigrammatic, as alive. Thy wit is a little gone by in these fastidious days — thy topics are staled by the “ new-born gauds ” of the time : — but great thou used to be in Public Ledgers,³¹ and in Chronicles,³¹ upon Chatham,³² and Shelburne, and Rockingham, and Howe, and Burgoyne, and Clinton, and the war which ended in the tearing from Great Britain her rebellious colonies, — and Keppel,³³ and Wilkes, and Sawbridge, and Bull, and Dunning, and Pratt, and Richmond — and such small politics. —

A little less facetious, and a great deal more obstreperous, was fine rattling, rattleheaded Plumer.³⁴ He was descended, — not in a right line, reader (for his lineal pretensions, like his personal, favoured a little of the sinister bend) — from the Plumers of Hertfordshire. So tradition gave him out; and certain family features not a little sanctioned the opinion. Certainly old Walter Plumer (his reputed author) had been a rake in his days, and visited much in Italy, and had seen the world. He was uncle, bachelor-uncle, to the fine old whig still living, who has represented the county in so many successive parliaments, and has a fine old mansion near Ware. Walter flourished in George the Second's days, and was the same who was summoned before the House of Commons about a business of franks, with the old Duchess of Marlborough. You may read of it in Johnson's "Life of Cave." Cave came off cleverly in that business. It is certain our Plumer did nothing to discountenance the rumour. He rather seemed pleased whenever it was, with all gentleness, insinuated. But, besides his family pretensions, Plumer was an engaging fellow, and sang gloriously. —

Not so sweetly sang Plumer as thou sangest, mild, child-like, pastoral M——; ³⁵ a flute's breathing less divinely whispering than thy Arcadian melodies, when, in tones worthy of Arden, thou didst chant that song sung by Amiens to the banished Duke,³⁶ which proclaims the winter wind more lenient than for a man to be ungrateful. Thy sire was old surly M——, the unapproachable churchwarden of Bishopsgate. He knew not what he did, when he begat thee, like spring, gentle offspring of blustering winter: — only unfor-

tunate in thy ending, which should have been mild, conciliatory, swan-like. —

Much remains to sing. Many fantastic shapes rise up, but they must be mine in private: — already I have fooled the reader to the top of his bent; — else could I omit that strange creature Woollet, who existed in trying the question, and *bought litigations*? — and still stranger, inimitable, solemn Hepworth, from whose gravity Newton might have deduced the law of gravitation. How profoundly would he nib a pen — with what deliberation would he wet a wafer! —

But it is time to close — night's wheels are rattling fast over me — it is proper to have done with this solemn mockery.

Reader, what if I have been playing with thee all this while — peradventure the very *names*, which I have summoned up before thee, are fantastic²⁷ — insubstantial — like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece:²⁸ —

Be satisfied that something answering to them has had a being. Their importance is from the past.

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO¹

IN Mr. Lamb's "Works," published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,² such as it was, or now appears to him to have been, between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his ; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school ; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand ; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple³ can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf — our *crug* — moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet,

somewhat less repugnant — (we had three banyan⁴ to four meat days in the week) — was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*),⁵ with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth — our scanty mutton crags on Fridays — and rather more savoury, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion) — he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt!⁶ I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my

first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the live-long day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing excursions to the New River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can — for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes. — How merrily we would sally forth into the fields; and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like young dace in the streams; getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying — while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings — the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them! — How

faint and languid, finally we would return, towards nightfall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless — shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement; or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower⁷ — to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor⁸ (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights — and this not once, but night after night — in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. — The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow; and under the cruellest

penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——,⁹ who, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks. (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered —— at Nevis, I think, or St. Kitts, —— some few years since? My friend Tobin¹⁰ was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat — happier than Caligula's minion,¹¹ could he have kept his own counsel — but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables — waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho)¹² set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.¹³

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses

used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." ¹⁴ But the sight of sleek, well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

"To feed our mind with idle portraiture." ¹⁵

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters) and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *goul*, and held in equal detestation. — suffered under the imputation.

" — 'T was said,
He ate strange flesh." ¹⁶

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me) — and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side. None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured

them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his school-fellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway,¹⁷ the then steward (for this happened a little after my time), with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of

——, an honest couple come to decay, — whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy ; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds ! — The governors on this occasion, much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family of ——, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to ——, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory. — I had left school then, but I well remember ——. He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad ; and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven ; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence. — As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square, Bedlam cells, ¹⁸ where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket — a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted — with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water — who *might not speak to him* ; — or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to

receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude:—and here he was shut up by himself *of nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.* This was the penalty for the second offence. — Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fe*,²⁰ arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire — all trace of his late “watchet weeds”²¹ carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frightened features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante²² had seized upon him. In this disguise he was brought into the hall (*L.’s favourite state-room*), where awaited him the whole number of his schoolfellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These

* One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with.— This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard’s brain; for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul),¹⁹ methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue.

were governors ; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia* ;²³ not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances, to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*,²⁴ to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours ; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room ; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer²⁵ was the Upper Master : but the Rev. Matthew Field²⁶ presided over that portion of the apartment, of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried

an accident, or a grammar, for form ; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod ; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good will — holding it “like a dancer.”²⁷ It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority ; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often stayed away whole days from us ; and when he came, it made no difference to us — he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to “insolent Greece or haughty Rome,”²⁸ that passed current among us — Peter Wilkins — the Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle — the Fortunate Blue-Coat Boy — and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operation ; making little sun-dials of paper ; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles* ; or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe ; or studying the art military over that laudable game “French and English,”²⁹ and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time — mixing the useful with the agreeable — as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke³⁰ chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian*; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levée, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus.³¹ How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots³² to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with Sardonian grin, observe to one of his upper boys, "how neat and fresh the twigs looked." While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite,³³ we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle,³⁴ while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry.³⁵ His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage

in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."³⁶

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus.³⁷ B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel³⁸ pipes.* — He would laugh, ay, and heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex*³⁹ — or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*,⁴⁰ or *inspicere in patinas*,⁴¹ of Terence — thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis*⁴² enough to move a Roman muscle. — He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer.

* In this and every thing B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction. — B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*.

— J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a “Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?” — Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, “Od’s my life, Sirrah” (his favourite adjuration), “I have a great mind to whip you,” — then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair — and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil’s Litany, with the expletory yell — “*and I WILL too.*” — In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor*⁴³ was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph, and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand — when droll squinting W — having been caught putting the inside of the master’s desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned*. This exquisite irreognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory* struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the

pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his literary life,⁴⁴ has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the *Country Spectator*⁴⁵ doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C. — when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed — “Poor J. B. ! — may all his faults be forgiven ; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities.”

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred. — First Grecian⁴⁶ of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T——e.⁴⁷ What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors ! — You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate ! — Co-Grecian with S. was Th——,⁴⁸ who has since executed with abil-

ity various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks. — Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta) a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the *Country Spectator*) of a *Treatise on the Greek Article*, against Sharpe. — M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas* ⁴⁹ (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel ⁵⁰ or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild, and unassuming. — Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the *Aboriginal Britons*, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems: a pale, studious Grecian. — Then followed poor S——, ⁵¹ ill-fated M——! ⁵² of these the Muse is silent,

Finding some of Edward's race
Unhappy, pass their annals by. ⁵³

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee — the dark pillar not yet turned — Samuel Taylor Coleridge — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! — How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young *Mirandula*), ⁵⁴ to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus ⁵⁵ (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic

draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar — while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy* ! Many were the “ wit-combats ” (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——, ⁵⁶ “ which two I behold like a Spanish great gallion, and an English man-of-war ; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.” ⁵⁷

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some poignant jest of theirs ; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus* ⁵⁸ of the school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible “ *bl——*,” for a gentler greeting — “ *bless thy handsome face !* ”

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia — the junior Le G—— and F—— ; ⁵⁹ who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect — ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning — exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp ; perishing, one by climate, and one

on the plains of Salamanca: — Le G—— sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured ; F—— dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——,⁶⁰ the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——,⁶¹ mildest of Missionaries — and both my good friends still — close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

“A CLEAR fire, a clean hearth,* and the rigour of the game.” This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God) who, next to her devotions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half and half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipt a wrong card, to take it up and play another.* These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought

* This was before the introduction of rugs, Reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinders betwixt your foot and the marble.

* As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day and lose him the next.

a good fight : cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sat bolt upright ; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side — their superstitions ; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life — and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it — saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play ; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game ; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced or connived at miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards : and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand ; and who, in his excess of candour, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind ! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do, — and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards — over a book.

Pope was her favourite author : his *Rape of the Lock* her favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre¹ in that poem ; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, *tradrille*. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant ; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles :² but I sup-

pose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love ; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners — a thing which the constancy of whist abhors ; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille³ — absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter gave him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces ; — the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone ; — above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*,⁴ — to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist ; — all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game : that was her word. It was a long meal ; not like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel ;⁵ perpetually changing postures and connexions ; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow ; kissing and scratching in a breath ; — but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational, antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage — nothing superfluous. No *flushes* — that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up: — that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colours of things. Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit for dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled — never to take the field? — She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and, in my mind, would have stript it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? — Why two colours, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it? —

“But the eye, my dear Madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason — he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualising would have kept out. — You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings — but confess to me, whether, walking

in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandyses,⁶ or among the Paul Potters⁷ in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards? — the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession — the gay triumph-assuring scarlets — the contrasting deadly-killing sables — the ‘hoary majesty of spades’⁸ — Pam in all his glory!⁹ —

“All these might be dispensed with; and, with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. — Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature’s), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in! — Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers — (work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol, — or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)⁹ — exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors’ money) or chalk and a slate!” —

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (Old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated)¹⁰ brought with him from Florence: —

this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care ; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say, — disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce “*go*,” or “*that’s a go*.” She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring “*two for his heels*.” There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms — such as pique repique — the capot — they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus : — Cards are warfare : the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport : when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight : with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money ; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play. — Three are still worse ; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance ; or a rotation of petty and

contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradrille. But in square games(*she meant whist*) all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species — though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold — or even an interested — by-stander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathises in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. — By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue — and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion! — chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious, that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spec-

tators, where no stake was depending? — Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number — and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize? — Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit — his memory, or combination-faculty rather — against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. — She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance, — the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with unsufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles, and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly) were entirely misplaced, and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other: — that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being

mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little blood shed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such. —

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been very agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget — Bridget Elia.¹¹

I grant there is something sneaking in it: but with a toothache or a sprained ankle, — when you are subdued and humble, — you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*. —

I grant it is not the highest style of man — I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle — she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologise. —

At such times those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible. — I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted ¹² her) — (dare I tell thee how foolish I am?) — I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we

gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and as I do not much relish appliances; there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

A CHAPTER ON EARS

I HAVE no ear.——¹

Mistake me not, reader, — nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me. — I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits ; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets — those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred, nor done anything to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance — to feel “quite unabashed,”* and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory ; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny, that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean — *for music*. — To say that this heart never melted at the concourse of sweet sounds,² would be a foul self-libel. — “*Water parted from the sea*”³ never fails to move it strangely. So does “*In infancy*.”³ But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue in those days) by a gentlewoman — the gentlest,

* “Earless on high stood, unabashed, Defoe.” *Dunciad*. Defoe had his ears cropped and was placed in the pillory.

sure, that ever merited the appellation — the sweetest — why should I hesitate to name Mrs. S——, * once the blooming Fanny Weatheral of the Temple — who had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was, even in his long coats; and to make him glow, tremble, and blush with a passion that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment, which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite, for Alice W——n.⁴

I even think that *sentimentally* I am disposed to harmony. But *organically* I am incapable of a tune. I have been practising “*God save the King*” all my life; whistling and humming of it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it. Yet hath the loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

I am not without suspicion that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For, thrumming, in my wild way, on my friend A.’s⁵ piano, the other morning, while he was engaged in an adjoining parlour, — on his return he was pleased to say, “*he thought it could not be the maid!*” On his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, his suspicions had lighted on *Jenny*. But a grace, snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being, — technically perhaps deficient, but higher informed from a principle common to all the fine arts, — had swayed the keys to a mood which *Jenny*, with all her (less cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend’s penetration and not with any view of disparaging *Jenny*.

* Spinkes.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet have I taken some pains) what a note in music is ; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough bass I contrive to guess at, from its being supereminently harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of *that* which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to *say* I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps, by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio* stand in the like relation of obscurity to me ; and *Sol, Fa, Mi, Re*, is as conjuring as *Baraliphton*.⁶

It is hard to stand alone — in an age like this, — (constituted to the quick and critical perception of all harmonious combinations, I verily believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal⁷ stumbled upon the gamut) to remain, as it were, singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art, which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating and refining the passions. — Yet rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you, that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter's hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness. But those unconnected, unset sounds are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is passive to those single strokes ; willingly enduring stripes, while it hath no task to con. To music it cannot be passive. It will strive — mine at least will — ' spite of its inaptitude to thrid the maze ; like an unskilled eye painfully

poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention! I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest, common-life sounds; — and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician⁸ becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth's⁹ Laughing Audience!) immovable, or affecting some faint emotion, — till (as some have said, that our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself in some cold Theatre in Hades, where some of the *forms* of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the *enjoyment*; or like that —

—— Party in a parlour,
All silent, and all DAMNED : ¹⁰

Above all, those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension. — Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying, to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore trage-

dies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime — these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music*.

I deny not, that in the opening of a concert, I have experienced something vastly lulling and agreeable : — afterwards followeth the languor, and the oppression. Like that disappointing book in Patmos ;¹¹ or, like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton,¹² doth music make her first insinuating approaches : — “ Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightful and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania*,¹³ and *mentis gratissimus error*.¹⁴ A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done. — So delightful these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them — winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humours, until at last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditations, and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*,¹⁵ discontent, cares, and weariness of life, surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else : continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this in-

fernal plague of melancholy seizeth on them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds ; which now, by no means, no labour, no persuasions they can avoid, they cannot be rid of it, they cannot resist."

Something like this "SCENE-TURNING" I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend *Nov* — ; ¹⁶ who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.*

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim abbey, some five and thirty years since, waking a new sense and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension — whether it be *that*, in which the psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings — or *that other*, which, with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind — a holy calm pervadeth me, — I am for the time

———— rapt above earth,

And possess joys not promised at my birth.¹⁷

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive, — impatient to overcome her "earthly" with his "heavenly," ¹⁸ — still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted *German* ocean, above which, in tri-

* I have been there, and still would go ;

'T is like a little heaven below. — *Dr. Watts.*

umphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions ¹⁹ *Haydn* ²⁰ and *Mozart*, ²⁰ with their attendant tritons, *Bach*, ²¹ *Beethoven*, ²⁰ and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps, — I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wit's end; — clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me — priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me — the genius of *his* religion hath me in her toils — a shadowy triple tiara invests the brow of my friend, fate so naked, so ingenious — he is Pope, — and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a she-Pope too, — tri-coroneted like himself ! I am converted, and yet a Protestant ; — at once *mal-leus hereticorum*, ²² and myself grand heresiarch : or three heresies centre in my person : — I am Marcion, ²³ Ebion, ²⁴ and Cerinthus ²⁵ — Gog and Magog ²⁶ — what not ? — till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran beer (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the rationalities of a purer faith ; and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and hostess.

WITCHES, AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS

WE are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational, and shrewd to detect an historic anomaly, as ourselves. But when once the invisible world was supposed to be opened, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion — of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd — could they have to guide them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony? — that maidens pined away, wasting inwardly as their waxen images consumed before a fire¹ — that corn was lodged, and cattle lamed — that whirlwinds uptore in diabolic revelry the oaks of the forest — or that spits and kettles only danced a fearful-innocent vagary about some rustic's kitchen when no wind was stirring — were all equally probable where no law of agency was understood. That the prince of the powers of darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of the earth, should lay preposterous siege to the weak fantasy of indigent eld — has neither likelihood nor unlikelihood *à priori* to us, who have no measure to guess at his policy, or standard to estimate what rate those anile souls may fetch in the devil's market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly symbolised by a goat,² was it to be wondered at so much, that *he* should come sometimes

in that body, and assert his metaphor. — That the intercourse was opened at all between both worlds was perhaps the mistake — but that once assumed, I see no reason for disbelieving one attested story of this nature more than another on the score of absurdity. There is no law to judge of the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticised.

I have sometimes thought that I could not have existed in the days of received witchcraft; that I could not have slept in a village where one of those reputed hags dwelt. Our ancestors were bolder or more obtuse. Amidst the universal belief that these wretches were in league with the author of all evil, holding hell tributary to their muttering, no simple Justice of the Peace seems to have scrupled issuing, or silly Headborough³ serving, a warrant upon them — as if they should subpœna Satan! — Prospero⁴ in his boat, with his books and wand about him, suffers himself to be conveyed away at the mercy of his enemies to an unknown island. He might have raised a storm or two, we think, on the passage. His acquiescence is in exact analogy to the non-resistance of witches to the constituted powers. — What stops the Fiend in Spenser⁵ from tearing Guyon to pieces — or who had made it a condition of his prey, that Guyon must take assay of the glorious bait — we have no guess. We do not know the laws of that country.

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-

closet, the History of the Bible, by Stackhouse,⁶ occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds—one of the ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot—attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel,⁷ which I wish that I had never seen. We shall come to that hereafter. Stackhouse is in two huge tomes—and there was a pleasure in removing folios of that magnitude, which, with infinite straining, was as much as I could manage, from the situation which they occupied upon an upper shelf. I have not met with the work from that time to this, but I remember it consisted of Old Testament stories, orderly set down, with the *objection* appended to each story, and the *solution* of the objection regularly tacked to that. The *objection* was a summary of whatever difficulties had been opposed to the credibility of the history, by the shrewdness of ancient or modern infidelity, drawn up with an almost complimentary excess of candour. The *solution* was brief, modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. To doubts so put, and so quashed, there seemed to be an end for ever. The dragon lay dead, for the foot of the veriest babe to trample on. But—like as was rather feared than realised from that slain monster in Spenser—from the womb of those crushed errors young dragonets would creep, exceeding the prowess of so tender a Saint George as myself to vanquish.⁸ The habit of expecting objections to every passage, set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I be-

came staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugnors. I was not to disbelieve them, but — the next thing to that — I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making a child an infidel, is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man's weakness, but the child's strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling! — I should have lost myself in these mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune, which about this time befel me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric — driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds — the elephant, and the camel — that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom returned since in any force to trouble me. — But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse, which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously. — That detestable picture!

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The nighttime solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The suffer-

ings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life — so far as memory serves in things so long ago — without an assurance, which realised its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel — (O that old man covered with a mantle!) I owe — not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy — but the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow — a sure bed-fellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expression) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the daylight, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was. — Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm — the hoping for a familiar voice — when they wake screaming — and find none to soothe them — what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves! The keeping them up till midnight, through candle-light and the unwholesome hours, as they are called, — would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution. — That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams — if dreams they were — for the scene of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears

would have come self-pictured in some shape or other —

Headless bear, black man, or ape⁹ —

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form. — It is not book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. Dear little T. H.¹⁰ who of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition — who was never allowed to hear of goblin or apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or to read or hear of any distressing story — finds all this world of fear, from which he has been so rigidly excluded *ab extra*, in his own “thick-coming fancies;”¹¹ and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity.

Gorgons,¹² and Hydras,¹³ and Chimæras¹⁴ — dire stories of Celæno and the Harpies¹⁵ — may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition — but they were there before. They are transcripts, types — the archetypes are in us, and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all? — or \

——Names, whose sense we see not,

Fray us with things that be not?¹⁶

Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such objects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury? — O, least of all! These terrors are of older standing. They date beyond body — or, without the body, they would have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, defined devils in Dante — tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching

demons — are they one half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit unembodied following him —

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on,
And turns no more his head ;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.*

That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual — that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth — that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy — are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable insight into our ante-mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadow-land of pre-existence.

My night-fancies have long ceased to be afflictive. I confess an occasional night-mare ; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, will come and look at me ; but I know them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I fight and grapple with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of architecture and of buildings — cities abroad, which I have never seen, and hardly have hope to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon — their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins, with an inexpressible sense of delight — a map-like distinctness of trace — and a daylight vividness of vision, that was all but being awake. — I have formerly

* Mr. Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*.

travelled among the Westmoreland fells ¹⁷ — my highest Alps, — but they are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, ¹⁸ to make out a shape in any way whatever, of Helvellyn. ¹⁹ Methought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, and pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara, and caverns,

Where Alph, the sacred river, runs, ²⁰

to solace his night solitudes — when I cannot muster a fiddle. Barry Cornwall ²¹ has his tritons and his nereids gambolling before him in nocturnal visions, and proclaiming sons born to Neptune — when my stretch of imaginative activity can hardly, in the night season, raise up the ghost of a fish-wife. To set my failures in somewhat a mortifying light — it was after reading the noble Dream of this poet, that my fancy ran strong upon these marine spectra; and the poor plastic power, such as it is, within me set to work, to humour my folly in a sort of dream that very night. Methought I was upon the ocean billows at some sea nuptials, riding and mounted high, with the customary train sounding their conchs before me, (I myself, you may be sure, the *leading god*,) and jollily we went careering over the main, till just where Ino Lucothea ²² should have greeted me (I think it was Ino) with a white embrace, the billows gradually subsiding, fell from a sea-roughness to a sea-calm, and thence to a river-motion, and that river (as happens in the familiarisation of dreams) was no other than the gen-

tle Thames, which landed me, in the wafture of a placid wave or two, alone, safe and inglorious, somewhere at the foot of Lambeth palace.²³

The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of mine, and a humourist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any strippling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be, — " Young man, what sort of dreams have you ? " I have so much faith in my old friend's theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning upon me, I presently subside into my proper element of prose, remembering those eluding nereids, and that inauspicious inland landing.

VALENTINE'S DAY

HAIL to thy returning festival, old Bishop Valentine! ¹ Great is thy name in the rubric, thou venerable Arch-flamen of Hymen! ² Immortal Go-between! who and what manner of person art thou? Art thou but a *name*, typifying the restless principle which impels poor humans to seek perfection in union? or wert thou indeed a mortal prelate, with thy tippet and thy rochet, thy apron on, and decent lawn sleeves? Mysterious personage! like unto thee, assuredly, there is no other mitred father in the calendar; not Jerome, ³ nor Ambrose, ³ nor Cyril; ⁴ nor the consigner of undipt infants to eternal torments, Austin, ⁵ whom all mothers hate; nor he who hated all mothers, Origen; nor Bishop Bull, ⁶ nor Archbishop Parker, ⁶ nor Whitgift. ⁶ Thou comest attended with thousands and ten thousands of little Loves, and the air is

Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. ⁷

Singing Cupids are thy choristers and thy precentors; and instead of the crosier, the mystical arrow is borne before thee.

In other words, this is the day on which those charming little missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forspent twopenny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what an extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires. In these little visual interpretations, no

emblem is so common as the *heart*, — that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears, — the bestuck and bleeding heart ; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affectations than an opera hat. What authority we have in history or mythology for placing the headquarters and metropolis of God Cupid in this anatomical seat rather than in any other, is not very clear ; but we have got it, and it will serve as well as any other. Else we might easily imagine, upon some other system which might have prevailed for any thing which our pathology knows to the contrary, a lover addressing his mistress, in perfect simplicity of feeling, “ Madam, my *liver* and fortune are entirely at your disposal ; ” or putting a delicate question, “ Amanda, have you a *midriff* to bestow ? ” But custom has settled these things, and awarded the seat of sentiment to the aforesaid triangle, while its less fortunate neighbours wait at animal and anatomical distance.

Not many sounds in life, and I include all urban and all rural sounds, exceed in interest a *knock at the door*. It “ gives a very echo to the throne where Hope is seated.” ⁸ But its issues seldom answer to this oracle within. It is so seldom that just the person we want to see comes. But of all the clamorous visitations the welcomest in expectation is the sound that ushers in, or seems to usher in, a Valentine. As the raven himself was hoarse ⁹ that announced the fatal entrance of Duncan, so the knock of the postman on this day is light, airy, confident, and befitting one that bringeth good tidings. It is less mechanical than on other days ; you will say, “ That is not the post I am sure.” Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymens ! — delightful eternal common-places, which “ having been will always be ; ” ¹⁰

which no school-boy nor school-man can write away; having your irreversible throne in the fancy and affections — what are your transports, when the happy maiden, opening with careful finger, careful not to break the emblematic seal, bursts upon the sight of some well-designed allegory, some type, some youthful fancy, not without verses —

Lovers all,
A madrigal,

or some such device, not over abundant in sense — young Love disclaims it, — and not quite silly — something between wind and water, a chorus where the sheep might almost join the shepherd, as they did, or as I apprehend they did, in Arcadia.

All Valentines are not foolish; and I shall not easily forget thine, my kind friend (if I may have leave to call you so) E. B.¹¹ — E. B. lived opposite a young maiden, whom he had often seen, unseen, from his parlour window in C — e Street. She was all joyousness and innocence, and just of an age to enjoy receiving a Valentine, and just of a temper to bear the disappointment of missing one with good humour. E. B. is an artist of no common powers; in the fancy parts of designing, perhaps inferior to none; his name is known at the bottom of many a well-executed vignette in the way of his profession, but no further; for E. B. is modest, and the world meets nobody half-way. E. B. meditated how he could repay this young maiden for many a favour which she had done him unknown; for when a kindly face greets us, though but passing by, and never knows us again, nor we it, we should feel it as an obligation; and E. B. did. This good artist set himself at work to please the damsel. It was just before Val-

entine's day three years since. He wrought, unseen and unsuspected, a wondrous work. We need not say it was on the finest gilt paper with borders — full, not of common hearts and heartless allegory, but all the prettiest stories of love from Ovid, and older poets than Ovid (for E. B. is a scholar). There was Pyramus and Thisbe,¹² and be sure Dido¹³ was not forgot, nor Hero and Leander,¹⁴ and swans more than sang in Cayster,¹⁵ with mottos and fanciful devices, such as beseemed, — a work in short of magic. Iris¹⁶ dipt the woof. This on Valentine's eve he commended to the all-swallowing indiscriminate orifice — (O ignoble trust!) — of the common post; but the humble medium did its duty, and from his watchful stand, the next morning, he saw the cheerful messenger knock, and by and by the precious charge delivered. He saw, unseen, the happy girl unfold the Valentine, dance about, clap her hands, as one after one the pretty emblems unfolded themselves. She danced about, not with light love, or foolish expectations, for she had no lover; or, if she had, none she knew that could have created those bright images which delighted her. It was more like some fairy present; a God-send, as our familiarly pious ancestors termed a benefit received, where the benefactor was unknown. It would do her no harm. It would do her good for ever after. It is good to love the unknown. I only give this as a specimen of E. B. and his modest way of doing a concealed kindness.

Good-morrow to my Valentine, sings poor Ophelia;¹⁷ and no better wish, but with better auspices, we wish to all faithful lovers, who are not too wise to despise old legends, but are content to rank themselves humble diocesans of old Bishop Valentine, and his true church.

MY RELATIONS

I AM arrived at that point of life, at which a man may account it a blessing, as it is a singularity, if he have either of his parents surviving. I have not that felicity — and sometimes think feelingly of a passage in Browne's *Christian Morals*,¹ where he speaks of a man that hath lived sixty or seventy years in the world. "In such a compass of time," he says, "a man may have a close apprehension what it is to be forgotten, when he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarcely the friends of his youth, and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time OBLIVION will look upon himself."

I had an aunt, a dear and good one.² She was one whom single blessedness had soured to the world. She often used to say, that I was the only thing in it which she loved ; and, when she thought I was quitting it, she grieved over me with mother's tears. A partiality quite so exclusive my reason cannot altogether approve. She was from morning till night poring over good books, and devotional exercises. Her favourite volumes were Thomas à Kempis,³ in Stanhope's Translation ; and a Roman Catholic Prayer Book, with the *matins* and *complines* regularly set down, — terms which I was at that time too young to understand. She persisted in reading them, although admonished daily concerning their Papistical tendency ; and went to church every Sabbath, as a good Protestant should do. These were the only books she studied ; though, I

think, at one period of her life, she told me, she had read with great satisfaction the Adventures of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman. Finding the door of the chapel in Essex Street ⁴ open one day — it was in the infancy of that heresy — she went in, liked the sermon, and the manner of worship, and frequented it at intervals for some time after. She came not for doctrinal points, and never missed them. With some little asperities in her constitution, which I have above hinted at, she was a steadfast, friendly being, and a fine *old Christian*. She was a woman of strong sense, and a shrewd mind — extraordinary at a *repartee*; one of the few occasions of her breaking silence — else she did not much value wit. The only secular employment I remember to have seen her engaged in, was, the splitting of French beans, and dropping them into a China basin of fair water. The odour of those tender vegetables to this day comes back upon my sense, redolent of soothing recollections. Certainly it is the most delicate of culinary operations.

Male aunts, as somebody calls them, I had none — to remember. By the uncle's side I may be said to have been born an orphan. Brother, or sister, I never had any — to know them.⁵ A sister, I think, that should have been Elizabeth,⁶ died in both our infancies. What a comfort, or what a care, may I not have missed in her! — But I have cousins, sprinkled about in Hertfordshire — besides *two*, with whom I have been all my life in habits of the closest intimacy, and whom I may term cousins *par excellence*. These are James and Bridget Elia. They are older than myself by twelve, and ten, years; and neither of them seems disposed, in matters of advice and

guidance, to waive any of the prerogatives which primogeniture confers. May they continue still in the same mind; and when they shall be seventy-five, and seventy-three years old (I cannot spare them sooner), persist in treating me in my grand climacteric precisely as a stripling, or younger brother!

James is an inexplicable cousin.⁷ Nature hath her unities, which not every critic can penetrate; or, if we feel, we cannot explain them. The pen of Yorick,⁸ and of none since his, could have drawn J. E. entire — those fine Shandian⁹ lights and shades, which make up his story. I must limp after in my poor antithetical manner, as the fates have given me grace and talent. J. E. then — to the eye of a common observer at least — seemeth made up of contradictory principles. — The genuine child of impulse, the frigid philosopher of prudence — the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine is invariably at war with his temperament, which is high sanguine. With always some fire-new project in his brain, J. E. is the systematic opponent of innovation, and crier down of everything that has not stood the test of age and experiment. With a hundred fine notions chasing one another hourly in his fancy, he is startled at the least approach to the romantic in others; and, determined by his own sense in everything, commends *you* to the guidance of common sense on all occasions. — With a touch of the eccentric in all which he does, or says, he is only anxious that *you* should not commit yourself by doing anything absurd or singular. On my once letting slip at table, that I was not fond of a certain popular dish, he begged me at any rate not to *say* so — for the world would think me mad. He disguises a pas-

sionate fondness for works of high art (whereof he hath amassed a choice collection), under the pretext of buying only to sell again — that his enthusiasm may give no encouragement to yours. Yet, if it were so, why does that piece of tender, pastoral Domenichino¹⁰ hang still by his wall? — is the ball of his sight much more dear to him? — or what picture-dealer can talk like him?

Whereas mankind in general are observed to warp their speculative conclusions to the bent of their individual humours, *his* theories are sure to be in diametrical opposition to his constitution. He is courageous as Charles of Sweden,¹¹ upon instinct; chary of his person, upon principle; as a travelling Quaker. — He has been preaching up to me, all my life, the doctrine of bowing to the great — the necessity of forms, and manner, to a man's getting on in the world. He himself never aims at either, that I can discover, — and has a spirit, that would stand upright in the presence of the Cham of Tartary.¹² It is pleasant to hear him discourse of patience — extolling it as the truest wisdom — and to see him during the last seven minutes that his dinner is getting ready. Nature never ran up in her haste a more restless piece of workmanship than when she moulded this impetuous cousin — and Art never turned out a more elaborate orator than he can display himself to be, upon his favourite topic of the advantages of quiet, and contentedness in the state, whatever it be, that we are placed in. He is triumphant on this theme, when he has you safe in one of those short stages that ply for the western road, in a very obstructing manner, at the foot of John Murray's¹³ street — where you get in when it is

empty, and are expected to wait till the vehicle hath completed her just freight—a trying three-quarters of an hour to some people. He wonders at your fidgetiness,—“where could we be better than we are, *thus sitting, thus consulting?*”¹⁴—“prefers, for his part, a state of rest to locomotion,”—with an eye all the while upon the coachman—till at length, waxing out of all patience, at *your want of it*, he breaks out into a pathetic remonstrance at the fellow for detaining us so long over the time which he had professed, and declares peremptorily, that “the gentleman in the coach is determined to get out, if he does not drive on that instant.”

Very quick at inventing an argument, or detecting a sophistry, he is incapable of attending *you* in any chain of arguing. Indeed he makes wild work with logic; and seems to jump at most admirable conclusions by some process, not at all akin to it. Consonantly enough to this, he hath been heard to deny, upon certain occasions, that there exists such a faculty at all in man as *reason*; and wondereth how man came first to have a conceit of it—enforcing his negation with all the might of *reasoning* he is master of. He has some speculative notions against laughter, and will maintain that laughing is not natural to *him*—when peradventure the next moment his lungs shall crow like Chanticleer. He says some of the best things in the world—and declareth that wit is his aversion. It was he who said, upon seeing the Eton boys at play in their grounds—*What a pity to think, that these fine ingenuous lads in a few years will all be changed into frivolous Members of Parliament!*

His youth was fiery, glowing, tempestuous—and in

age he discovereth no symptom of cooling. This is that which I admire in him. I hate people who meet Time half-way. I am for no compromise with that inevitable spoiler. While he lives, J. E. will take his swing. — It does me good, as I walk towards the street of my daily avocation, on some fine May morning, to meet him marching in a quite opposite direction, with a jolly handsome presence, and shining sanguine face, that indicates some purchase in his eye — a Claude ¹⁵ — or a Hobbima ¹⁶ — for much of his enviable leisure is consumed at Christie's, ¹⁷ and Phillips's — or where not, to pick up pictures, and such gauds. On these occasions he mostly stoppeth me, to read a short lecture on the advantages a person like me possesses above himself, in having his time occupied with business which he *must do* — assureth me that he often feels it hang heavy on his hands — wishes he had fewer holidays — and goes off — Westward Ho! — chanting a tune to Pall Mall ¹⁸ — perfectly convinced that he has convinced me — while I proceed in my opposite direction tuneless.

It is pleasant again to see this Professor of Indifference doing the honours of his new purchase, when he has fairly housed it. You must view it in every light till *he* has found the best — placing it at this distance, and at that, but always suiting the focus of your sight to his own. You must spy at it through your fingers, to catch the aërial perspective — though you assure him that to you the landscape shows much more agreeable without that artifice. Woe be to the luckless wight, who does not only not respond to his rapture, but who should drop an unseasonable intimation of preferring one of his anterior bargains to the present! — The last

is always his best hit — his “*Cynthia of the minute*.”¹⁹ Alas! how many a mild Madonna have I known to *come in* — a Raphael!²⁰ — keep its ascendancy for a few brief moons — then, after certain intermedial degradations from the front drawing-room to the back gallery, thence to the dark parlour, — adopted in turn by each of the Carracci,²¹ under successive lowering ascriptions of filiation, mildly breaking its fall — consigned to the oblivious lumber-room, *go out* at last a Lucca Giordano,²² or plain Carlo Maratti!²³ — which things when I beheld — musing upon the chances and mutabilities of fate below, hath made me to reflect upon the altered condition of great personages, or that woful Queen of Richard the Second —

—set forth in pomp,

She came adorned hither like sweet May.

Sent back like Hollowmass or shortest day.²⁴

With great love for *you*, J. E. hath but a limited sympathy with what you feel or do. He lives in a world of his own, and makes slender guesses at what passes in your mind. He never pierces the marrow of your habits. He will tell an old established play-goer, that Mr. Such-a-one, of So-and-so (naming one of the theatres), is a very lively comedian — as a piece of news! He advertised me but the other day of some pleasant green lanes which he had found out for me, *knowing me to be a great walker*, in my own immediate vicinity — who have haunted the identical spot any time these twenty years! — He has not much respect for that class of feelings which goes by the name of sentimental. He applies the definition of real evil to bodily suffering exclusively — and rejecteth all others as imaginary. He is affected by the sight, or the bare

supposition, of a creature in pain, to a degree which I have never witnessed out of womankind. A constitutional acuteness to this class of sufferings may in part account for this. The animal tribe in particular he taketh under his especial protection. A broken-winded or spur-galled horse is sure to find an advocate in him. An over-loaded ass is his client for ever. He is the apostle to the brute kind — the never-failing friend of those who have none to care for them. The contemplation of a lobster boiled, or eels skinned *alive*, will wring him so, that “all for pity he could die.”²⁵ It will take the savour from his palate, and the rest from his pillow, for days and nights. With the intense feeling of Thomas Clarkson,²⁶ he wanted only the steadiness of pursuit, and unity of purpose, of that “true yoke-fellow with Time,” to have effected as much for the *Animal*, as he hath done for the *Negro Creation*. But my uncontrollable cousin is but imperfectly formed for purposes which demand co-operation. He cannot wait. His amelioration-plans must be ripened in a day. For this reason he has cut but an equivocal figure in benevolent societies, and combinations for the alleviation of human sufferings. His zeal constantly makes him to outrun, and put out, his co-adjutors. He thinks of relieving, — while they think of debating. He was black-balled out of a society for the Relief of * * * *,²⁷ because the fervour of his humanity toiled beyond the formal apprehension, and creeping processes, of his associates. I shall always consider this distinction as a patent of nobility in the Elia family!

Do I mention these seeming inconsistencies to smile at, or upbraid, my unique cousin? Marry, heaven, and

all good manners, and the understanding that should be between kinsfolk, forbid! — With all the strangenesses of this *strangest of the Elias* — I would not have him in one jot or tittle other than he is ; neither would I barter or exchange my wild kinsman for the most exact, regular, and every-way consistent kinsman breathing.

In my next, reader, I may perhaps give you some account of my cousin Bridget — if you are not already surfeited with cousins — and take you by the hand, if you are willing to go with us, on an excursion which we made a summer or two since, in search of *more cousins* —

Through the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire.²⁸

THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE

I WAS born,¹ and passed the first seven years of my life, in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountain, its river, I had almost said — for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places? — these are my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot.

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templar knights to bide,
Till they decayd through pride.²

Indeed, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time — the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden; that goodly pile

Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,³

confronting, with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown Office Row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which

washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades! ⁴ a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, ⁵ where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astoundment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never caught, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep!

Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived! ⁶

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure, and silent heart language of the old dial! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost everywhere vanished? If its business use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance, and good-hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate

for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun;"⁷ and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tombstones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell,⁸ who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains and sun-dials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes :

What wondrous life is this I lead !
 Ripe apples drop about my head.
 The luscious clusters of the vine
 Upon my mouth do crush their wine.
 The nectarine, and curious peach,
 Into my hands themselves do reach.
 Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
 Insnares with flowers, I fall on grass.
 Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
 Withdraws into its happiness.
 The mind, that ocean, where each kind
 Does straight its own resemblance find ;
 Yet it creates, transcending these,
 Far other worlds, and other seas;
 Annihilating all that 's made
 To a green thought in a green shade.
 Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
 Or at some fruit tree's mossy root,
 Casting the body's vest aside,
 My soul into the boughs does glide :
 There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
 Then whets and claps its silver wings ;
 And, till prepared for longer flight,
 Waves in its plumes the various light.

How well the skilful gardener drew,
Of flowers and herbs, this dial new !
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run :
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers ? *

The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner, fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up, or bricked over. Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the South-Sea House, what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile ! Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies, spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent-wanton lips, in the square of Lincoln's Inn,* when I was no bigger than they were figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The fashion, they tell me, is gone by, and these things are esteemed childish. Why not then gratify children, by letting them stand ? Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening images to them at least. Why must everything smack of man, and mannish ? Is the world all grown up ? Is childhood dead ? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments ? The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures that still flitter and chatter about that area, less gothic in appearance ? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one half so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams those exploded cherubs uttered ?

They have lately gothicised the entrance to the

* From a copy of verses entitled *The Garden*.

Inner Temple-hall, and the library front, to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse¹⁰ that stood over the former? a stately arms! and who has removed those frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianised the end of the Paper-buildings? — my first hint of allegory! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps which made its pavement awful! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the fore part of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you, when you passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors. The roguish eye of J — ll,¹¹ ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie a repartee with it. But what insolent familiar durst have mated Thomas Coventry?¹² — whose person was a quadrate, his step massy and elephantine, his face square as the lion's, his gait peremptory and path-keeping, indivertible from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the brow-beater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came; for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an Elisha bear.¹³ His growl was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke, his invitatory notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He

took it, not by pinches, but a palmful at once, diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waistcoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tintured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace.

By his side a milder form was sometimes to be seen; the pensive gentility of Samuel Salt.¹⁴ They were coevals, and had nothing but that and their benchership in common. In politics Salt was a whig, and Coventry a staunch tory. Many a sarcastic growl did the latter cast out — for Coventry had a rough spinous humour — at the political confederates of his associate, which rebounded from the gentle bosom of the latter like cannon-balls from wool. You could not ruffle Samuel Salt.

S. had the reputation of being a very clever man, and of excellent discernment in the chamber practice of the law. I suspect his knowledge did not amount to much. When a case of difficult disposition of money, testamentary or otherwise, came before him, he ordinarily handed it over with a few instructions to his man Lovel, — who was a quick little fellow, and would despatch it out of hand by the light of natural understanding, of which he had an uncommon share. It was incredible what repute for talents S. enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity. He was a shy man; a child might pose him in a minute — indolent and procrastinating to the last degree. Yet men would give him credit for vast application in spite of himself. He was not to be trusted with himself with impunity. He never dressed for a dinner-party but he forgot his sword — they wore swords then — or some other

necessary part of his equipage. Lovel had his eye upon him on all these occasions, and ordinarily gave him his cue. If there was anything which he could speak unseasonably, he was sure to do it. — He was to dine at a relative's of the unfortunate Miss Blandy¹⁶ on the day of her execution ; — and L. who had a wary foresight of his probable hallucinations, before he set out, schooled him with great anxiety not in any possible manner to allude to her story that day. S. promised faithfully to observe the injunction. He had not been seated in the parlour, where the company was expecting the dinner summons, four minutes, when, a pause in the conversation ensuing, he got up, looked out of the window, and pulling down his 'ruffles — an ordinary motion with him — observed, "it was a gloomy day," and added, "Miss Blandy must be hanged by this time, I suppose." Instances of this sort were perpetual. Yet S. was thought by some of the greatest men of his time a fit person to be consulted, not alone in matters pertaining to the law, but in the ordinary niceties and embarrassments of conduct — from force of manner entirely. He never laughed. He had the same good fortune among the female world, — was a known toast with the ladies, and one or two are said to have died for love of him — I suppose, because he never trifled or talked gallantry with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions. He had a fine face and person, but wanted, methought, the spirit that should have shown them off with advantage to the women. His eye lacked lustre. Not so, thought Susan P——; ¹⁷ who, at the advanced age of sixty, was seen, in the cold evening time, unaccompanied, wetting the pavement of B——d Row with tears that fell in drops which

might be heard, because her friend had died that day — he whom she had pursued with a hopeless passion for the last forty years — a passion which years could not extinguish or abate ; nor the long resolved, yet gently enforced, puttings off of unrelenting bachelorhood dissuade from its cherished purpose. Mild Susan P —, thou hast now thy friend in heaven.

Thomas Coventry was a cadet of the noble family of that name. He passed his youth in contracted circumstances, which gave him early those parsimonious habits which in after-life never forsook him ; so that, with one windfall or another, about the time I knew him he was master of four or five hundred thousand pounds ; nor did he look, or walk, worth a moidore less. He lived in a gloomy house opposite the pump in Serjeant's Inn, Fleet Street. J., the counsel, is doing self-imposed penance in it, for what reason I divine not at this day. C. had an agreeable seat at North Cray,¹⁸ where he seldom spent above a day or two at a time in the summer ; but preferred, during the hot months, standing at his window in this damp, close, well-like mansion, to watch as he said, "the maids drawing water all day long." I suspect he had his within-door reasons for the preference. *Hic currus et arma fuère.*¹⁹ He might think his treasure more safe. His house had the aspect of a strong box. C. was a close hunk — a hoarder rather than a miser — or, if a miser, none of the mad Elwes²⁰ breed, who have brought discredit upon a character, which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. One may hate a true miser, but cannot, I suspect, so easily despise him. By taking care of the pence, he is often enabled to part with the pounds, upon a scale

that leaves us careless generous fellows at an immeasurable distance behind. C. gave away £30,000 at once in his life-time to a blind charity. His housekeeping was severely looked after, but he kept the table of a gentleman. He would know who came in and who went out of his house, but his kitchen chimney was never suffered to freeze.

Salt was his opposite in this, as in all — never knew what he was worth in the world ; and having but a competency for his rank, which his indolent habits were little calculated to improve, might have suffered severely if he had not had honest people about him. Lovel took care of everything. He was at once his clerk, his good servant, his dresser, his friend, his “ flapper,” ²¹ his guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer. He did nothing without consulting Lovel, or failed in anything without expecting and fearing his admonishing. He put himself almost too much in his hands, had they not been the purest in the world. He resigned his title almost to respect as a master, if L. could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was a servant.

I knew this Lovel.²² He was a man of an incorrigible and losing honesty. A good fellow withal, and “ would strike.”²³ In the cause of the oppressed he never considered inequalities, or calculated the number of his opponents. He once wrestled a sword out of the hand of a man of quality that had drawn upon him : and pommelled him severely with the hilt of it. The swordsman had offered insult to a female — an occasion upon which no odds against him could have prevented the interference of Lovel. He would stand next day bare-headed to the same person, modestly to

excuse his interference — for L. never forgot rank, where something better was not concerned. L. was the liveliest little fellow breathing, had a face as gay as Garrick's,²⁴ whom he was said greatly to resemble (I have a portrait of him which confirms it), possessed a fine turn for humorous poetry — next to Swift²⁵ and Prior²⁶ — moulded heads in clay or plaster of Paris to admiration,²⁷ by the dint of natural genius merely ; turned cribbage boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection ; took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility ; made punch better than any man of his degree in England ; had the merriest quips and conceits, and was altogether as brimful of rogueries and inventions as you could desire. He was a brother of the angle, moreover, and just such a free, hearty, honest companion as Mr. Izaak Walton²⁸ would have chosen to go a fishing with. I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness — “a remnant most forlorn of what he was,”²⁹ — yet even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favourite Garrick. He was greatest, he would say, in Bayes³⁰ — “was upon the stage nearly throughout the whole performance, and as busy as a bee.” At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in his smart new livery to see her, and she blessed herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was “her own bairn.” And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished that sad second-childhood might have a mother still to lay its head

upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.

With Coventry, and with Salt, in their walks upon the terrace, most commonly Peter Pierson³¹ would join, to make up a third. They did not walk linked arm-in-arm in those days — “as now our stout triumvirs sweep the streets,” — but generally with both hands folded behind them for state, or with one at least behind, the other carrying a cane. P. was a benevolent, but not a prepossessing man. He had that in his face which you could not term unhappiness; it rather implied an incapacity of being happy. His cheeks were colourless, even to whiteness. His look was uninviting, resembling (but without his sourness) that of our great philanthropist. I know that he *did* good acts, but I could never make out what he *was*. Contemporary with these, but subordinate, was Daines Barrington³² — another oddity — he walked burly and square — in imitation, I think, of Coventry — howbeit he attained not to the dignity of his prototype. Nevertheless, he did pretty well, upon the strength of being a tolerable antiquarian, and having a brother a bishop. When the account of his year’s treasurership came to be audited, the following singular charge was unanimously disallowed by the bench: “Item, disbursed Mr. Allen, the gardener, twenty shillings, for stuff to poison the sparrows, by my orders.” Next to him was old Barton³³ — a jolly negation, who took upon him the ordering of the bills of fare for the parliament chamber, where the benchers dine — answering to the combination rooms at college — much to the easement of his less epicurean brethren. I know nothing more of him. — Then Read,³⁴ and Twopenny³⁵ — Read,

good-humoured and personable — Twopenny, good-humoured, but thin, and felicitous in jests upon his own figure. If T. was thin, Wharry³⁶ was attenuated and fleeting. Many must remember him (for he was rather of later date) and his singular gait, which was performed by three steps and a jump regularly succeeding. The steps were little efforts, like that of a child beginning to walk; the jump comparatively vigorous, as a foot to an inch. Where he learned this figure, or what occasioned it, I could never discover. It was neither graceful in itself, nor seemed to answer the purpose any better than common walking. The extreme tenuity of his frame, I suspect set him upon it. It was a trial of poisoning. Twopenny would often rally him upon his leanness, and hail him as Brother Lusty; but W. had no relish of a joke. His features were spiteful. I have heard that he would pinch his cat's ears extremely, when anything had offended him. Jackson³⁷ — the omniscient Jackson he was called — was of this period. He had the reputation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon³⁸ of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage, of the cook applying to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down *edge* bone of beef in his bill of commons. He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be — as I have given it — fortifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed the manciple (for the time) learned and happy. Some do spell it yet perversely, *aitch* bone, from a fanciful resemblance between its shape, and that of the aspirate so denominated. I had almost

forgotten Mingay ³⁹ with the iron hand — but he was somewhat later. He had lost his right hand by some accident, and supplied it with a grappling hook, which he wielded with a tolerable adroitness. I detected the substitute, before I was old enough to reason whether it were artificial or not. I remember the astonishment it raised in me. He was a blustering, loud-talking person ; and I reconciled the phenomenon to my ideas as an emblem of power — somewhat like the horns in the forehead of Michael Angelo's Moses.⁴⁰ Baron Maseres,⁴¹ who walks (or did till very lately) in the costume of the reign of George the Second, closes my imperfect recollections of the old benchers of the Inner Temple.

Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me? Ye inexplicable, half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away the preternatural mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you? Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me — to my childish eyes — the mythology of the Temple? In those days I saw Gods, as “old men covered with a mantle,”⁴² walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry perish, — extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling, — in the heart of childhood, there will, for ever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition — the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital — from everyday forms educing the unknown and the uncommon. In that little Goshen⁴³ there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination

shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

P. S. I have done injustice to the soft shade of Samuel Salt. See what it is to trust to imperfect memory, and the erring notices of childhood! Yet I protest I always thought that he had been a bachelor! This gentleman, R. N.⁴⁴ informs me, married young, and losing his lady in child-bed, within the first year of their union, fell into a deep melancholy, from the effects of which, probably, he never thoroughly recovered. In what a new light does this place his rejection (O call it by a gentler name!) of mild Susan P——, unravelling into beauty certain peculiarities of this very shy and retiring character! — Henceforth let no one receive the narratives of Elia for true records! They are, in truth, but shadows of fact — verisimilitudes, not verities — or sitting but upon the remote edges and outskirts of history. He is no such honest chronicler as R. N., and would have done better perhaps to have consulted that gentleman, before he sent these incondite reminiscences to press. But the worthy sub-treasurer — who respects his old and his new masters — would but have been puzzled at the indecorous liberties of Elia. The good man wots not, peradventure, of the license which *Magazines* have arrived at in this plain-speaking age, or hardly dreams of their existence beyond the *Gentleman's* — his furthest monthly excursions in this nature having been long confined to the holy ground of honest *Urban's*⁴⁵ obituary. May it be long before his own name shall help to swell those columns of unenvied flattery! — Meantime, O ye New Benchers of the Inner Temple, cherish him kindly, for he is himself the

kindest of human creatures. Should infirmities overtake him — he is yet in green and vigorous senility — make allowances for them, remembering that “ye yourselves are old.”⁴⁶ So may the Winged Horse, your ancient badge and cognisance, still flourish! so may future Hookers⁴⁷ and Seldens⁴⁸ illustrate your church and chambers! So may the sparrows, in default of more melodious quiristers, unpoisoned hop about your walks! so may the fresh-coloured and cleanly nursery maid, who, by leave, airs her playful charge in your stately gardens, drop her prettiest blushing curtsy as ye pass, reductive of juvenescent emotion! so may the youngers of this generation eye you, pacing your stately terrace, with the same superstitious veneration, with which the child Elia gazed on the Old Worthies that solemnised the parade before ye!

GRACE BEFORE MEAT

THE custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, when dinners were precarious things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing; when a belly-full was a windfall, and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer's or goat's flesh would naturally be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace. It is not otherwise easy to be understood, why the blessing of food—the act of eating—should have had a particular expression of thanksgiving annexed to it, distinct from that implied and silent gratitude with which we are expected to enter upon the enjoyment of the many other various gifts and good things of existence.

I own that I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out upon a pleasant walk, for a moonlight ramble, for a friendly meeting, or a solved problem. Why have we none for books, those spiritual repasts—a grace before Milton—a grace before Shakespeare—a devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the *Fairy Queen*?¹—but, the received ritual having prescribed these forms to the solitary ceremony of manducation, I shall confine my observations to the experience which I have had of the grace, properly so called; commending my new scheme for extension to a niche in the grand philosophical, poetical, and per-

chance in part heretical, liturgy, now compiling by my friend Homo Humanus,² for the use of a certain snug congregation of Utopian Rabelæsiian Christians,³ no matter where assembled.

The form then of the benediction before eating has its beauty at a poor man's table, or at the simple and unprovocative repasts of children. It is here that the grace becomes exceedingly graceful. The indigent man, who hardly knows whether he shall have a meal the next day or not, sits down to his fare with a present sense of the blessing which can be but feebly acted by the rich, into whose minds the conception of wanting a dinner could never, but by some extreme theory, have entered. The proper end of food — the animal sustenance — is barely contemplated by them. The poor man's bread is his daily bread, literally his bread for the day. Their courses are perennial.

Again, the plainest diet seems the fittest to be preceded by the grace. That which is least stimulative to appetite, leaves the mind most free for foreign considerations. A man may feel thankful, heartily thankful, over a dish of plain mutton with turnips, and have leisure to reflect upon the ordinance and institution of eating; when he shall confess a perturbation of mind, inconsistent with the purposes of the grace, at the presence of venison or turtle. When I have sate (*a rarus hospes*)⁴ at rich men's tables, with the savoury soup and messes steaming up the nostrils, and moistening the lips of the guests with desire and a distracted choice, I have felt the introduction of that ceremony to be unseasonable. With the ravenous orgasm upon you, it seems impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment. It is a confusion of purpose to mutter out praises

from a mouth that waters. The heats of epicurism put out the gentle flame of devotion. The incense which rises round is pagan, and the belly-god intercepts it for his own. The very excess of the provision beyond the needs, takes away all sense of proportion between the end and means. The giver is veiled by his gifts. You are startled at the injustice of returning thanks — for what? — for having too much, while so many starve. It is to praise the Gods amiss.⁵

I have observed this awkwardness felt, scarce consciously perhaps, by the good man who says the grace. I have seen it in clergymen and others — a sort of shame — a sense of the co-presence of circumstances which unhallow the blessing. After a devotional tone put on for a few seconds, how rapidly the speaker will fall into his common voice, helping himself or his neighbour, as if to get rid of some uneasy sensation of hypocrisy. Not that the good man was a hypocrite, or was not most conscientious in the discharge of the duty; but he felt in his inmost mind the incompatibility of the scene and the viands before him with the exercise of a calm and rational gratitude.

I hear somebody exclaim, — Would you have Christians sit down at table, like hogs to their troughs, without remembering the Giver? — no — I would have them sit down as Christians, remembering the Giver, and less like hogs. Or if their appetites must run riot, and they must pamper themselves with delicacies for which east and west are ransacked, I would have them postpone their benediction to a fitter season, when appetite is laid; when the still small voice can be heard, and the reason of the grace returns — with temperate diet and restricted dishes. Gluttony and

surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving. When Jeshurun⁶ waxed fat, we read that he kicked. Virgil knew the harpy-nature better, when he put into the mouth of Celæno⁷ any thing but a blessing. We may be gratefully sensible of the deliciousness of some kinds of food beyond others, though that is a meaner and inferior gratitude: but the proper object of the grace is sustenance, not relishes; daily bread, not delicacies; the means of life, and not the means of pampering the carcass. With what frame or composure, I wonder, can a city chaplain pronounce his benediction at some great Hall feast, when he knows that his last concluding pious word — and that, in all probability, the sacred name which he preaches — is but the signal for so many impatient harpies to commence their foul orgies, with as little sense of true thankfulness (which is temperance) as those Virgilian fowl! It is well if the good man himself does not feel his devotions a little clouded, those foggy sensuous steams mingling with and polluting the pure altar sacrifice.

The severest satire upon full tables and surfeits is the banquet which Satan, in the “Paradise Regained,” provides for a temptation in the wilderness: —

A table richly spread in regal mode,
With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,
Gris-amber-steamed; all fish from sea or shore,
Freshet or purling brook, for which was drained
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.⁸

The Tempter, I warrant you, thought these cates would go down without the recommendatory preface of a benediction. They are like to be short graces

where the devil plays the host. — I am afraid the poet wants his usual decorum in this place. Was he thinking of the old Roman luxury, or of a gaudy day⁹ at Cambridge? This was a temptation fitter for a Helio-gabalus.¹⁰ The whole banquet is too civic and culinary, and the accompaniments altogether a profanation of that deep, abstracted, holy scene. The mighty artillery of sauces, which the cook-fiend conjures up, is out of proportion to the simple wants and plain hunger of the guest. He that disturbed him in his dreams, from his dreams might have been taught better. To the temperate fantasies of the famished Son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves? — He dreamed indeed,

—— As appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats? —

Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought;
He saw the prophet also how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awaked
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And ate the second time after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.¹¹

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the divine Hungerer. To which of these two visionary banquets, think you, would the introduction of what is called the grace have been most fitting and pertinent?

Theoretically I am no enemy to graces; but practically I own that (before meat especially) they seem to involve something awkward and unseasonable. Our appetites, of one or another kind, are excellent spurs to our reason, which might otherwise but feebly set about the great ends of preserving and continuing the species. They are fit blessings to be contemplated at a distance with a becoming gratitude: but the moment of appetite (the judicious reader will apprehend me) is, perhaps, the least fit season for that exercise. The Quakers who go about their business, of every description, with more calmness than we, have more title to the use of these benedictory prefaces. I have always admired their silent grace, and the more because I have observed their applications to the meat and drink following to be less passionate and sensual than ours. They are neither gluttons nor wine-bibbers as a people. They eat, as a horse bolts his chopt hay, with indifference, calmness, and cleanly circumstances. They neither grease nor slop themselves. When I see a citizen in his bib and tucker, I cannot imagine it a surplice.

I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a physiognomical character in the tastes for food. C——¹² holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings. I am not certain but he is right. With the decay of my first innocence, I confess a less

and less relish daily for these innocuous cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost their gust with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous under culinary disappointments, as to come home at the dinner hour, for instance, expecting some savoury mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted — that commonest of kitchen failures — puts me beside my tenour. — The author of the “*Rambler*”¹³ used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favourite food. Was this the music quite proper to be preceded by the grace? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing might be contemplated with less perturbation? I quarrel with no man’s tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions otherwise, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish — his Dagon¹⁴ — with a special consecration of no ark but the fat tureen before him. Graces are the sweet preluding strains to the banquets of angels and children: to the roots and severer repasts of the *Chartreuse*; ¹⁵ to the slender, but not slenderly acknowledged, refection of the poor and humble man: but at the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they become of dissonant mood, less timed and tuned to the occasion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs would be, which children hear tales of, at Hog’s Norton.¹⁶ We sit too long at our meals, or are too curious in the study of them, or

too disordered in our application to them, or engross too great a portion of these good things (which should be common) to our share, to be able with any grace to say grace. To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion is to add hypocrisy to injustice. A lurking sense of this truth is what makes the performance of this duty so cold and spiritless a service at most tables. In houses where the grace is as indispensable as the napkin, who has not seen that never settled question arise, as to *who shall say it*; while the good man of the house and the visitor clergyman, or some other guest belike of next authority from years or gravity, shall be bandying about the office between them as a matter of compliment, each of them not unwilling to shift the awkward burthen of an equivocal duty from his own shoulders?

I once drank tea in company with two Methodist divines of different persuasions, whom it was my fortune to introduce to each other for the first time that evening. Before the first cup was handed round, one of these reverend gentlemen put it to the other, with all due solemnity, whether he chose to *say any thing*. It seems it is the custom with some sectaries to put up a short prayer before this meal also. His reverend brother did not at first quite apprehend him, but upon an explanation, with little less importance he made answer, that it was not a custom known in his church: in which courteous evasion the other acquiescing for good manners' sake, or in compliance with a weak brother, the supplementary or tea-grace was waived altogether. With what spirit might not Lucian¹⁷ have painted two priests, of *his* religion, playing into each other's hands the compliment of performing or omit-

ting a sacrifice,—the hungry God meantime, doubtful of his incense, with expectant nostrils hovering over the two flamens, and (as between two stools) going away in the end without his supper.

A short form upon these occasions is felt to want reverence ; a long one, I am afraid, cannot escape the charge of impertinence. I do not quite approve of the epigrammatic conciseness with which that equivocal wag (but my pleasant school-fellow) C. V. L.,¹⁸ when importuned for a grace, used to inquire, first slyly leering down the table, “Is there no clergyman here?” significantly adding, “Thank G—.” Nor do I think our old form at school quite pertinent, where we were used to preface our bald bread and cheese suppers with a preamble, connecting with that humble blessing a recognition of benefits the most awful and overwhelming to the imagination which religion has to offer. *Non tunc illis erat locus.*¹⁹ I remember we were put to it to reconcile the phrase “good creatures,” upon which the blessing rested, with the fare set before us, wilfully understanding that expression in a low and animal sense,—till some one recalled a legend,²⁰ which told how in the golden days of Christ’s, the young Hospitallers were wont to have smoking joints of roast meat upon their nightly boards, till some pious benefactor, commiserating the decencies, rather than the palates, of the children, commuted our flesh for garments, and gave us — *horresco referens*²¹ — trowsers instead of mutton.²²

DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children : to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk ¹ (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene — so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country — of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood.² Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Aliee put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field³ was, how beloved and respected by every body, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county ; but still she lived in it in a

manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay,⁴ and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die,⁵ her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman ; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was ; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer — here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted — the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain ; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house ; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm ;" and how frightened I used to be,

though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she — and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grand-children, having us to the great house in the holydays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Cæsars,^e that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out — sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me — and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then, — and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at — or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me — or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth — or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings, — I had more pleasure in these busy-

idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grand-children, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, ⁷ because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us ; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of every body, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially ; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain ;—and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed ; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death ; and how I bore his death

as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me ; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about 'their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n ;^s and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens — when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of representation, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was ; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech ; “ We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing ; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores

of Lethe⁹ millions of ages before we have existence, and a name" — and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side — but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS

In a Letter to B. F. Esq. at Sydney, New South Wales

MY DEAR F.—When I think how welcome the sight of a letter from the world where you were born must be to you in that strange one to which you have been transplanted, I feel some compunctious visitings at my long silence. But, indeed, it is no easy effort to set about a correspondence at our distance. The weary world of waters between us oppresses the imagination. It is difficult to conceive how a scrawl of mine should ever stretch across it. It is a sort of presumption to expect that one's thoughts should live so far. It is like writing for posterity; and reminds me of one of Mrs. Rowe's superscriptions,² "Alcander to Strephon, in the shades." Cowley's Post-Angel³ is no more than would be expedient in such an intercourse. One drops a packet at Lombard Street, and in twenty-four hours a friend in Cumberland gets it as fresh as if it came in ice. It is only like whispering through a long trumpet. But suppose a tube let down from the moon, with yourself at one end, and *the man* at the other; it would be some bawk to the spirit of conversation, if you knew that the dialogue exchanged with that interesting theosophist would take two or three revolutions of a higher luminary in its passage. Yet for aught I know, you may be some parasangs nigher that primitive idea—Plato's man⁴—than we in England here have the honour to reckon ourselves.

Epistolary matter usually compriseth three topics;

news, sentiment, and puns. In the latter, I include all non-serious subjects ; or subjects serious in themselves, but treated after my fashion, non-seriously. — And first, for news. In them, the most desirable circumstance, I suppose, is that they shall be true. But what security can I have that what I now send you for truth shall not before you get it unaccountably turn into a lie ? For instance, our mutual friend P. is at this present writing — *my Now* — in good health, and enjoys a fair share of worldly reputation. You are glad to hear it. This is natural and friendly. But at this present reading — *your Now* — he may possibly be in the Bench, or going to be hanged, which in reason ought to abate something of your transport (*i. e.* at hearing he was well, &c.), or at least considerably to modify it. I am going to the play this evening, to have a laugh with Munden.⁵ — You have no theatre, I think you told me, in your land of d — d realities. You naturally lick your lips, and envy me my felicity. Think but a moment, and you will correct the hateful emotion. Why, it is Sunday morning with you, and 1823. This confusion of tenses, this grand solecism of *two presents*, is in a degree common to all postage. But if I sent you word to Bath or the Devises, that I was expecting the aforesaid treat this evening, though at the moment you received the intelligence my full feast of fun would be over, yet there would be for a day or two after, as you would well know, a smack, a relish left upon my mental palate, which would give rational encouragement for you to foster a portion at least of the disagreeable passion, which it was in part my intention to produce. But ten months hence your envy

or your sympathy would be as useless as a passion spent upon the dead. Not only does truth, in these long intervals, unessence herself, but (what is harder) one cannot venture a crude fiction for the fear that it may ripen into a truth upon the voyage. What a wild improbable banter I put upon you some three years since——of Will Weatherall having married a servant-maid! I remember gravely consulting you how we were to receive her—for Will's wife was in no case to be rejected; and your no less serious replication in the matter; how tenderly you advised an abstemious introduction of literary topics before the lady, with a caution not to be too forward in bringing on the carpet matters more within the sphere of her intelligence; your deliberate judgment, or rather wise suspension of sentence, how far jacks, and spits, and mops, could with propriety be introduced as subjects; whether the conscious avoiding of all such matters in discourse would not have a worse look than the taking of them casually in our way; in what manner we should carry ourselves to our maid Becky, Mrs. William Weatherall being by; whether we show more delicacy, and a truer sense of respect for Will's wife, by treating Becky with our customary chiding before her, or by an unusual deferential civility paid to Becky as to a person of great worth, but thrown by the caprice of fate into a humble station. There were difficulties, I remember, on both sides, which you did me the favour to state with the precision of a lawyer, united to the tenderness of a friend. I laughed in my sleeve at your solemn pleadings, when lo! while I was valuing myself upon this flam put upon you in New South Wales, the devil in England, jealous pos-

sibly of any lie-children not his own, or working after my copy, has actually instigated our friend (not three days since) to the commission of a matrimony which I had only conjured up for your diversion. William Weatherall has married Mrs. Cotterel's maid. But to take it in its truest sense, you will see, my dear F., that news from me must become history to you; which I neither profess to write, nor indeed care much for reading. No person, under a diviner, can with any prospect of veracity conduct a correspondence at such an arm's length. Two prophets, indeed, might thus interchange intelligence with effect; the epoch of the writer (Habakkuk) falling in with the true present time of the receiver (Daniel);. but then we are no prophets.

Then as to sentiment. It fares little better with that. This kind of dish, above all, requires to be served up hot; or sent off in water-plates, that your friend may have it almost as warm as yourself. If it have time to cool, it is the most tasteless of all cold meats. I have often smiled at a conceit of the late Lord C.⁶ It seems that travelling somewhere about Geneva, he came to some pretty green spot, or nook, where a willow, or something, hung so fantastically and invitingly over a stream — was it? — or a rock? — no matter — but the stillness and the repose, after a weary journey 't is likely, in a languid moment of his lordship's hot restless life, so took his fancy, that he could imagine no place so proper, in the event of his death, to lay his bones in. This was all very natural and excusable as a sentiment, and shows his character in a very pleasing light. But when from a passing sentiment it came to be an act; and when by a positive

testamentary disposal, his remains were actually carried all that way from England ; who was there, some desperate sentimentalists excepted, that did not ask the question, Why could not his lordship have found a spot as solitary, a nook as romantic, a tree as green and pendent, with a stream as emblematic to his purpose, in Surrey, in Dorset, or in Devon ? Conceive the sentiment boarded up, freighted, entered at the Custom House (startling the tide-waiters with the novelty), hoisted into a ship. Conceive it pawed about and handled between the rude jests of tarpaulin ruffians — a thing of its delicate texture — the salt bilge wetting it till it became as vapid as a damaged lustring. Suppose it in material danger (mariners have some superstition about sentiments) of being tossed over in a fresh gale to some propitiatory shark (spirit of Saint Gothard,⁷ save us from a quietus so foreign to the deviser's purpose !) but it has happily evaded a fishy consummation. Trace it then to its lucky landing — at Lyons shall we say ? — I have not the map before me — jostled upon four men's shoulders — baiting at this town — stopping to refresh at t'other village — waiting a passport here, a license there ; the sanction of the magistracy in this district, the concurrence of the ecclesiastics in that canton ; till at length it arrives at his destination, tired out and jaded from a brisk sentiment into a feature of silly pride or senseless affectation. How few sentiments, my dear F., I am afraid we can set down, in the sailor's phrase, as quite sea-worthy.

Lastly, as to the agreeable levities, which, though contemptible in bulk, are the twinkling corpuscula which should irradiate a right friendly epistle — your

puns and small jests are, I apprehend, extremely circumscribed in their sphere of action. They are so far from a capacity of being packed up and sent beyond sea, they will scarce endure to be transported by hand from this room to the next. Their vigour is as the instant of their birth. The nutriment for their brief existence is the intellectual atmosphere of the by-standers: or this last, is the fine slime of Nilus — the *melior lutus*,⁸ — whose maternal recipiency is as necessary as the *sol pater* to their equivocal generation. A pun hath a hearty kind of present ear-kissing smack with it; you can no more transmit it in its pristine flavour, than you can send a kiss. — Have you not tried in some instances to palm off a yesterday's pun upon a gentleman, and has it answered? Not but it was new to his hearing, but it did not seem to come new from you. It did not hitch in. It was like picking up at a village ale-house a two-days-old newspaper. You have not seen it before, but you resent the stale thing as an affront. This sort of merchandise above all requires a quick return. A pun, and its recognitory laugh, must be co-instantaneous. The one is the brisk lightning, the other the fierce thunder. A moment's interval, and the link is snapped. A pun is reflected from a friend's face as from a mirror. Who would consult his sweet visnomy, if the polished surface were two or three minutes (not to speak of twelve-months, my dear F.) in giving back its copy?

I cannot image to myself whereabouts you are. When I try to fix it, Peter Wilkins's island⁹ comes across me. Sometimes you seem to be in the *Hades* of *Thieves*. I see Diogenes¹⁰ prying among you with his perpetual fruitless lantern. What must you be willing by this

time to give for the sight of an honest man ! You must almost have forgotten how *we* look. And tell me, what your Sydneyites do ? are they th**v*ng all day long ? Merciful heaven ! what property can stand against such a depredation ! The kangaroos — your Aborigines — do they keep their primitive simplicity un-Europe-tainted, with those little short forepuds, looking like a lesson framed by nature to the pick-pocket ! Marry, for diving into fobs they are rather lamely provided *à priori* ; but if the hue and cry were once up, they would show as fair a pair of hind-shifters as the expertest loco-motor in the colony. — We hear the most improbable tales at this distance. Pray, is it true that the young Spartans among you are born with six fingers, which spoils their scanning ? — It must look very odd ; but use reconciles. For their scansion, it is less to be regretted, for if they take it into their heads to be poets, it is odds but they turn out, the greater part of them, vile plagiarists. — Is there much difference to see to between the son of a th**f, and the grandson ? or where does the taint stop ? Do you bleach ¹¹ in three or in four generations ? — I have many questions to put, but ten Delphic voyages ¹² can be made in a shorter time than it will take to satisfy my scruples. — Do you grow your own hemp ? — What is your staple trade, exclusive of the national profession, I mean ? Your lock-smiths, I take it, are some of your great capitalists.

I am insensibly chatting to you as familiarly as when we used to exchange good-morrows out of our old contiguous windows, in pump-famed Hare Court ¹³ in the Temple. Why did you ever leave that quiet corner ? — Why did I ? — with its complement of four poor elms,

from whose smoke-dyed barks, the theme of jesting ruralists, I picked my first lady-birds! My heart is as dry as that spring sometimes proves in a thirsty August, when I revert to the space that is between us; a length of passage enough to render obsolete the phrases of our English letters before they can reach you. But while I talk, I think you hear me, — thoughts dallying with vain surmise —

Aye me ! while thee the seas and sounding shores
Hold far away.¹⁴

Come back, before I am grown into a very old man, so as you shall hardly know me. Come, before Bridget walks on crutches. Girls whom you left children have become sage matrons, while you are tarrying there. The blooming Miss W——r¹⁵ (you remember Sally W——r) called upon us yesterday, an aged crone. Folks whom you knew die off every year. Formerly, I thought that death was wearing out, — I stood ram-parted about with so many healthy friends. The departure of J. W.,¹⁶ two springs back corrected my delusion. Since then the old divorcer has been busy. If you do not make haste to return, there will be little left to greet you, of me, or mine.

THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

I LIKE to meet a sweep — understand me — not a grown sweeper — old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive — but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek — such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep* *peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning toward these dim specks — poor blots — innocent blacknesses —

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth — these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's-self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni*¹ — to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades! — to shudder with the idea that “now, surely, he must be lost for ever!” — to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered day-light — and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished

weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel ! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly ; not much unlike the old stage direction in Macbeth, where the " Apparition of a child crowned with a tree in his hand rises." ²

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him two-pence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

There is a composition, the ground-work of which I have understood to be the sweet wood 'yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it ; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this " wholesome and pleasant beverage," on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street — *the only Salopian house*,³ — I have never yet ventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients — a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the

organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper — whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive — but so it is, that no possible taste or odour to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals — cats — when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house*; yet be it known to thee, reader — if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact — he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savoury mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labours of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honours of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the

kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odours. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapours in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth ; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop* — the precocious herb-woman's darling — the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas — the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldest thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three half-pennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny) — so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'er-charged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin — so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredienced soups — nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket !

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts ; the jeers and taunts of the populace ; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularly of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. — In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough — yet outwardly

trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened — when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth⁴ — but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the *March to Finchley*, grinning at the pie-man — there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever — with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth — for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it — that I could have been content, if the honour of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket, presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to “air” them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

A sable cloud
Turns forth her silver lining on the night.⁵

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility:—and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguisement, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticesments of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels⁶ mourning for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu⁷ be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless *defiliations*.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle,⁸ a few years since — under a ducal canopy — (that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur) — encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets interwoven — folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius⁹ — was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noon-day, fast asleep, a lost chimney sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between

the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle. — But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty, as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions — is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was but now creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*,¹⁰ and resting-place. — By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a preëxistent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE¹¹ was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a

solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew.¹² Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at ; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quitted out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment ; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity ; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table ; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD,¹³ ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table — for Rochester¹⁴ in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame

Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave,¹⁵ while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable youngers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings — how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors — how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating" — how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony — how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good he should lose their custom ; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts — "The King," — the "Cloth," — which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering ; — and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, "May the Brush supersede the Laurel." All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans ; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reek-

ing sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

Golden lads and lasses must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust — ¹⁶

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died — of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.¹⁷

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M.¹ was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius² in the second chapter of his Mundane Mutations, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Cho-fang, literally the Cook's holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as youngsters of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry

branches, and the labour of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from? — not from the burnt cottage — he had smelt that smell before — indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young fire-brand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted — *crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the newborn pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been

flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

“You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog’s tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there, I say?”

“O, father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats.”

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out “Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste—O Lord,”—with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son’s, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavour, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both

father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbours would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given, — to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present — without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the

manifest iniquity of the decision ; and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke,³ who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind. —

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favour of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*,⁴ I will maintain it to be the most delicate — *princeps obsoniorum*.⁵

I speak not of your grown porkers — things between pig and pork — those hobbydehoys — but a young and

tender suckling—under a moon old — guiltless as yet of the sty — with no original speck of the *amor immunditiæ*,⁶ the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest — his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble, and a grumble — the mild forerunner, or *prælude*, of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled — but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavour comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called — the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance — with the adhesive oleaginous — O call it not fat — but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it — the tender blossoming of fat — fat cropped in the bud — taken in the shoot — in the first innocence — the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food — the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna — or, rather, fat and lean, (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is doing — it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string! — Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes — radiant jellies — shooting stars —

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth! — wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have

proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal — wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation — from these sins he is happily snatched away —

Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care — '7

his memory is odoriferous — no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon — no coal-heaver bolteth him in reeking sausages — he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure — and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of Savors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent — a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause — too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her — like lovers' kisses, she biteth — she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish — but she stoppeth at the palate — she meddleth not with the appetite — and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig — let me speak his praise — is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwined, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is — good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbours' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"),⁸ capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything."⁹ I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavours, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate — It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge)¹⁰ a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy like, I made him a present of — the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into

tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I — I myself, and not another — would eat her nice cake — and what should I say to her the next time I saw her — how naughty I was to part with her pretty present — and the odour of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last — and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto —

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's,¹¹ and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who

obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*)¹² superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are — but consider, he is a weakling — a flower.

BLAKESMOOR¹ IN H—SHIRE

I DO not know a pleasure more affecting than to range at will over the deserted apartments of some fine old family mansion. The traces of extinct grandeur admit of a better passion than envy: and contemplations on the great and good, whom we fancy in succession to have been its inhabitants, weave for us illusions, incompatible with the bustle of modern occupancy, and vanities of foolish present aristocracy. The same difference of feeling, I think, attends us between entering an empty and a crowded church. In the latter it is chance but some present human frailty — an act of inattention on the part of some of the auditory — or a trait of affectation, or worse, vain-glory, on that of the preacher — puts us by our best thoughts, disharmonising the place and the occasion. But wouldst thou know the beauty of holiness? — go alone on some week-day, borrowing the keys of good Master Sexton, traverse the cool aisles of some country church: think of the piety that has kneeled there — the congregations, old and young, that have found consolation there — the meek pastor — the docile parishioner. With no disturbing emotions, no cross conflicting comparisons, drink in the tranquillity of the place, till thou thyself become as fixed and motionless as the marble effigies that kneel and weep around thee.

Journeying northward lately, I could not resist going some few miles out of my road to look upon the remains of an old great house with which I had been impressed in this way in infancy. I was apprised that

the owner of it had lately pulled it down; still I had a vague notion that it could not all have perished, that so much solidity with magnificence could not have been crushed all at once into the mere dust and rubbish which I found it.

The work of ruin had proceeded with a swift hand indeed, and the demolition of a few weeks had reduced it to — an antiquity.

I was astonished at the indistinction of everything. Where had stood the great gates? What bounded the courtyard? Whereabout did the out-houses commence? a few bricks only lay as representatives of that which was so stately and so spacious.

Death does not shrink up his human victim at this rate. The burnt ashes of a man weigh more in their proportion.

Had I seen these brick-and-mortar knaves at their process of destruction, at the plucking of every pannel I should have felt the varlets at my heart. I should have cried out to them to spare a plank at least out of the cheerful store-room, in whose hot window-seat I used to sit and read Cowley,² with the grass-plot before, and the hum and flappings of that one solitary wasp that ever haunted it about me — it is in mine ears now, as oft as summer returns; or a pannel of the yellow room.

Why, every plank and pannel of that house for me had magic in it. The tapestried bed-rooms — tapestry so much better than painting — not adorning merely, but peopling the wainscots — at which childhood ever and anon would steal a look, shifting its coverlid (replaced as quickly) to exercise its tender courage in a momentary eye-encounter with those stern bright vis-

ages, staring reciprocally — all Ovid³ on the walls, in colours vividder than his descriptions. Actæon⁴ in mid sprout, with the unappeasable prudery of Diana; and the still more provoking and almost culinary coolness of Dan Phœbus, eel-fashion, deliberately divesting of Marsyas.⁵

Then, that haunted room — in which old Mrs. Battle died — whereinto I have crept, but always in the day time, with a passion of fear; and a sneaking curiosity, terror-tainted, to hold communication with the past. — *How shall they build it up again?*

It was an old deserted place, yet not so long deserted but that traces of the splendour of past inmates were everywhere apparent. Its furniture was still standing — even to the tarnished gilt leather battle-dores, and crumbling feathers of shuttlecocks in the nursery, which told that children had once played there. But I was a lonely child, and had the range at will of every apartment, knew every nook and corner, wondered and worshipped everywhere.

The solitude of childhood is not so much the mother of thought, as it is the feeder of love, and silence, and admiration. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years, that, though there lay — I shame to say how few roods distant from the mansion — half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not till late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found, to my astonishment, a pretty brawling brook had been the Lacus Incognitus of my infancy. Variegated views, extensive prospects

— and those at no great distance from the house — I was told of such — what were they to me, being out of the boundaries of my Eden? — So far from a wish to roam, I would have drawn, methought, still closer the fences of my chosen prison; and have been hemmed in by a yet securer cincture of those excluding garden walls. I could have exclaimed with that garden-loving poet —

Bind me, ye woodbines, in your twines;
Curl me about, ye gadding vines;
And oh so close your circles lace,
That I may never leave this place;
But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
Ere I your silken bondage break,
Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
And, courteous briars, nail me through.⁶

I was here as in a lonely temple. Snug firesides — the low-built roof — parlours ten feet by ten — frugal boards, and all the homeliness of home — these were the condition of my birth — the wholesome soil which I was planted in. Yet, without impeachment to their tenderest lessons, I am not sorry to have had glances of something beyond; and to have taken, if but a peep, in childhood, at the contrasting accidents of a great fortune.

To have the feeling of gentility, it is not necessary to have been born gentle. The pride of ancestry may be had on cheaper terms than to be obliged to an importunate race of ancestors; and the coatless antiquary in his unemblazoned cell, revolving the long line of a Mowbray's⁷ or De Clifford's⁸ pedigree, at those sounding names may warm himself into as gay a vanity as those who do inherit them. The claims of birth are ideal merely, and what herald shall go

about to strip me of an idea? Is it trenchant to their swords? can it be hacked off as a spur can? or torn away like a tarnished garter?

What, else, were the families of the great to us? what pleasure should we take in their tedious genealogies, or their capitulatory brass monuments? What to us the uninterrupted current of their bloods, if our own did not answer within us to a cognate and corresponding elevation?

Or wherefore else, O tattered and diminished 'Scutcheon that hung upon the time-worn walls of thy princely stairs, BLAKESMOOR! have I in childhood so oft stood poring upon the mystic characters — thy emblematic supporters, with their prophetic "Resurgam"⁹ — till, every dreg of peasantry purging off, I received unto myself Very Gentility? Thou wert first in my morning eyes; and of nights, hast detained my steps from bedward, till it was but a step from gazing at thee to dreaming on thee.

This is the only true gentry by adoption; the veritable change of blood, and not, as empirics have fabled, by transfusion.

Who it was by dying that had earned the splendid trophy, I know not, I inquired not; but its fading rags, and colours cobweb-stained, told that its subject was of two centuries back.

And what if my ancestor at that date was some Damoetas¹⁰ — feeding flocks, not his own, upon the hills of Lincoln — did I in less earnest vindicate to myself the family trappings of this once proud Ægon? — repaying by a backward triumph the insults he might possibly have heaped in his life-time upon my poor pastoral progenitor.

If it were presumption so to speculate, the present owners of the mansion had least reason to complain. They had long forsaken the old house of their fathers for a newer trifle; and I was left to appropriate to myself what images I could pick up, to raise my fancy, or to soothe my vanity.

I was the true descendant of those old W——s; ¹¹ and not the present family of that name, who had fled the old waste places.

Mine was that gallery of good old family portraits, which as I have gone over, giving them in fancy my own family name, one — and then another — would seem to smile — reaching forward from the canvas, to recognise the new relationship; while the rest looked grave, as it seemed, at the vacancy in their dwelling, and thoughts of fled posterity.

That Beauty with the cool blue pastoral drapery, and a lamb — that hung next the great bay window — with the bright yellow H——shire hair, and eye of watchet hue ¹² — so like my Alice! ¹³ — I am persuaded she was a true Elia — Mildred Elia, I take it.

Mine too, BLAKESMOOR, was thy noble Marble Hall, with its mosaic pavements, and its Twelve Cæsars ¹⁴ — stately busts in marble — ranged round: of whose countenances, young reader of faces as I was, the frowning beauty of Nero, I remember, had most of my wonder; but the mild Galba had my love. There they stood in the coldness of death, yet freshness of immortality.

Mine too, thy lofty Justice Hall, with its one chair of authority, high-backed and wickered, once the terror of luckless poacher, or self-forgetful maiden — so common since, that bats have roosted in it,

Mine too — whose else? — thy costly fruit-garden, with its sun-baked southern wall; the ampler pleasure-garden, rising backwards from the house in triple terraces, with flower-pots now of palest lead, save that a speck here and there, saved from the elements, bespake their pristine state to have been gilt and glittering; the verdant quarters backward still; and, stretching still beyond, in old formality, thy firry wilderness, the haunt of the squirrel, and the day-long murmuring wood-pigeon, with that antique image in the centre, God or Goddess I wist not; but child of Athens or old Rome paid never a sincerer worship to Pan¹⁵ or to Sylvanus¹⁶ in their native groves, than I to that fragmental mystery.

Was it for this, that I kissed my childish hands too fervently in your idol worship, walks and windings of BLAKESMOOR! for this, or what sin of mine, has the plough passed over your pleasant places? I sometimes think that as men, when they die, do not die all,¹⁷ so of their extinguished habitations there may be a hope — a germ to be revived.

POOR RELATIONS

A POOR Relation — is the most irrelevant thing in nature,— a piece of impertinent correspondency,— an odious approximation,— a haunting conscience,— a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of our prosperity,— an unwelcome remembrancer,— a perpetually recurring mortification,— a drain on your purse,— a more intolerable dun upon your pride,— a drawback upon success,— a rebuke to your rising,— a stain in your blood,— a blot on your 'scutcheon,— a rent in your garment,— a death's head at your banquet,— Agathocles' pot,¹— a Mordecai in your gate,²— a Lazarus at your door,— a lion in your path,— a frog in your chamber,— a fly in your ointment,— a mote in your eye,— a triumph to your enemy, an apology to your friends,— the one thing not needful,— the hail in harvest,— the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you "That is Mr. ——." A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demands, and, at the same time, seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling and —embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and —draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner-time —when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company, but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table. He never cometh upon open days, when your wife says with some complacency, "My dear, perhaps Mr. —— will drop in to-day." He remembereth birthdays—

and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declareth against fish, the turbot being small — yet suffereth himself to be importuned into a slice against his first resolution. He sticketh by the port — yet will be prevailed upon to empty the remainder glass of claret, if a stranger press it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servants, who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think “they have seen him before.” Everyone speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be — a tide waiter. He calleth you by your Christian name, to imply that his other is the same with your own. He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had less diffidence. With half the familiarity he might pass for a casual dependent; with more boldness he would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend, yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth up no rent — yet ’t is odds, from his garb and demeanour, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table; refuseth on the score of poverty, and — resents being left out. When the company break up he proffereth to go for a coach — and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather; and will thrust in some mean and quite unimportant anecdote of — the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as “he is blest in seeing it now.” He reviveth past situations to institute what he calleth — favourable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price of your furniture: and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the

urn is the more elegant shape, but, after all, there was something more comfortable about the old tea-kettle — which you must remember. He dare say you must find a great convenience in having a carriage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet; and did not know, till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable; his compliments perverse; his talk a trouble; his stay pertinacious; and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner, as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is — a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other; you may pass him off tolerably well; but your indigent she-relative is hopeless. “He is an old humorist,” you may say, “and affects to go thread-bare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one.” But in the indications of female poverty there can be no disguise. No woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. “She is plainly related to the L——s; or what does she at their house?” She is, in all probability, your wife’s cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the case. Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble, and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes — *aliquando sufflaminandus erat* ³ — but there is no raising her. You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped — after the gentlemen.

Mr. — requests the honour of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former — because he does. She calls the servant *Sir*; and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The housekeeper patronises her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for harpsichord.

Richard Amlet, Esq.,⁴ in the play, is a noticeable instance of the disadvantages to which this chimerical notion of *affinity constituting a claim to an acquaintance*, may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady with a great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old woman, who persists in calling him "her son Dick." But she has where-withal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface, under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor W——⁵ was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride; but its quality was inoffensive; it was not of that sort which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a distance; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect, which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation

in the blue clothes, because I would not thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W—— went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion to the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom.⁶ He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer⁷ must have walked erect; and in which Hooker,⁸ in his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no discommendable vanity. In the depths of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among books, which insult not; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W—— had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of colleges had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hope of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the young man, the determination which at length tore him from academical pursuits for ever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gowns-

men and the townsmen, as they are called — the trading part of the latter especially — is carried to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown — insensible to the winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford or be suffocated. He chose the former; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High Street to the back of **** college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him — finding him in a better mood — upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist,⁹ which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity, or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, “knew his mounted sign — and fled.”¹⁰ A letter on his father's table the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.¹¹

I do not know how, upon a subject which I began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital so eminently painful; but this theme of poor relationship is replete with so much matter for tragic as well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I received on this matter, are certainly not attended with anything painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman, clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was of the essence of gravity; his words few or none; and I was not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so — for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A peculiar sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the days of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows a world ago at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined — and I thought he was the owner of all that money. Awful ideas of the Tower twined themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning; a captive — a stately being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who, in spite of an habitual general respect

which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument, touching their youthful days. The houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill, and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal residence was on the plain; a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses.¹² My father had been a leading Mountaineer; and would still maintain the general superiority, in skill and hardihood, of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys* (so were they called), of which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic — the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out — and bad blood bred; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-com mendation of the old Minster; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remembered with anguish the thought that came over me: “Perhaps he will never come here again.” He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused with a resistance amounting

to rigour, when my aunt — an old Lincolnian, but who had something of this in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season — uttered the following memorable application — “Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day.” The old gentleman said nothing at the time — but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills me now as I write it — “Woman, you are superannuated.” John Billet did not survive long, after the digesting of this affront; but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored! and, if I remember aright, another pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (anno 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and a penny, which were found in his escritoire after his decease, left the world, blessing God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was — a Poor Relation.

STAGE ILLUSION

A PLAY is said to be well or ill acted in proportion to the scenical illusion produced. Whether such illusion can in any case be perfect, is not the question. The nearest approach to it, we are told, is, when the actor appears wholly unconscious of the presence of spectators. In tragedy — in all which is to affect the feelings — this undivided attention to his stage business seems indispensable. Yet it is, in fact, dispensed with every day by our cleverest tragedians ; and while these references to an audience, in the shape of rant or sentiment, are not too frequent or palpable, a sufficient quantity of illusion for the purposes of dramatic interest may be said to be produced in spite of them. But, tragedy apart, it may be inquired whether, in certain characters in comedy, especially those which are a little extravagant, or which involve some notion repugnant to the moral sense, it is not a proof of the highest skill in the comedian when, without absolutely appealing to an audience, he keeps up a tacit understanding with them ; and makes them, unconsciously to themselves, a party in the scene. The utmost nicety is required in the mode of doing this ; but we speak only of the great artists in the profession.

The most mortifying infirmity in human nature, to feel in ourselves, or to contemplate in another, is, perhaps, cowardice. To see a coward *done to the life* upon a stage would produce anything but mirth. Yet we most of us remember Jack Bannister's¹ cowards. Could anything be more agreeable, more pleasant ?

We love the rogues. How was this effected but by the exquisite art of the actor in a perpetual sub-insinuation to us, the spectators, even in the extremity of the shaking fit, that he was not half such a coward as we took him for? We saw all the common symptoms of the malady upon him; the quivering lip, the cowering knees, the teeth chattering; and could have sworn "that man was frightened." But we forgot all the while — or kept it almost a secret to ourselves — that he never once lost his self-possession; that he let out by a thousand droll looks and gestures — meant to *us*, and not at all supposed to be visible to his fellows in the scene, that his confidence in his own resources had never once deserted him. Was this a genuine picture of a coward? or not rather a likeness, which the clever artist contrived to palm upon us instead of an original; while we secretly connived at the delusion for the purpose of greater pleasure, than a more genuine counterfeiting of the imbecility, helplessness, and utter self-desertion, which we know to be concomitants of cowardice in real life, could have given us?

Why are misers so hateful in the world, and so endurable on the stage, but because the skilful actor, by a sort of sub-reference, rather than direct appeal to us, disarms the character of a great deal of its odiousness, by seeming to engage *our* compassion for the insecure tenure by which he holds his money bags and parchments? By this subtle vent half of the hatefulness of the character — the self-closeness with which in real life it coils itself up from the sympathies of men — evaporates. The miser becomes sympathetic; *i. e.* is no genuine miser. Here again a diverting likeness is substituted for a very disagreeable reality.

Spleen, irritability — the pitiable infirmities of old men, which produce only pain to behold in the realities, counterfeited upon a stage, divert not altogether for the comic appendages to them, but in part from an inner conviction that they are *being acted* before us; that a likeness only is going on, and not the thing itself. They please by being done under the life, or beside it; not *to the life*. When Gatty² acts an old man, is he angry indeed? or only a pleasant counterfeited, just enough of a likeness to recognise, without pressing upon us the uneasy sense of a reality.

Comedians, paradoxical as it may seem, may be too natural. It was the case with a late actor. Nothing could be more earnest or true than the manner of Mr. Emery;³ this told excellently in his Tyke, and characters of a tragic cast. But when he carried the same rigid exclusiveness of attention to the stage business, and wilful blindness and oblivion of everything before the curtain into his comedy, it produced a harsh and dissonant effect. He was out of keeping with the rest of the *Personae Dramatis*. There was as little link between him and them as betwixt himself and the audience. He was a third estate, dry, repulsive, and unsocial to all. Individually considered, his execution was masterly. But comedy is not this unbending thing; for this reason, that the same degree of credibility is not required of it as to serious scenes. The degrees of credibility demanded to the two things may be illustrated by the different sort of truth which we expect when a man tells us a mournful or a merry story. If we suspect the former of falsehood in any one tittle, we reject it altogether. Our tears refuse to flow at a suspected imposition. But the teller of a mirthful

tale has latitude allowed him. We are content with less than absolute truth. 'Tis the same with dramatic illusion. We confess we love in comedy to see an audience naturalised behind the scenes, taken into the interest of the drama, welcomed as by-standers however. There is something ungracious in a comic actor holding himself aloof from all participation or concern with those who are come to be diverted by him. Macbeth must see the dagger, and no ear but his own be told of it; but an old fool in farce may think he *sees something*, and by conscious words and looks express it, as plainly as he can speak, to pit, box, and gallery. When an impertinent in tragedy, an Osric,⁴ for instance, breaks in upon the serious passions of the scene, we approve of the contempt with which he is treated. But when the pleasant impertinent of comedy, in a piece purely meant to give delight, and raise mirth out of whimsical perplexities worries the studious man with taking up his leisure, or making his house his home, the same sort of contempt expressed (however *natural*) would destroy the balance of delight in the spectators. To make the intrusion comic, the actor who plays the annoyed man must a little desert nature; he must, in short, be thinking of the audience, and express only so much dissatisfaction and peevishness as is consistent with the pleasure of comedy. In other words, his perplexity must seem half put on. If he repel the intruder with the sober set face of a man in earnest, and more especially if he deliver his expostulations in a tone which in the world must necessarily provoke a duel, his real-life manner will destroy the whimsical and purely dramatic existence of the other character (which to render it comic

demands an antagonist comicality on the part of the character opposed to it), and convert what was meant for mirth, rather than belief, into a downright piece of impertinence indeed, which would raise no diversion in us, but rather stir pain, to see inflicted in earnest upon any unworthy person. A very judicious actor (in most of his parts) seems to have fallen into an error of this sort in his playing with Mr. Wrench^s in the farce of *Free and Easy*.

Many instances would be tedious; these may suffice to show that comic acting at least does not always demand from the performer that strict abstraction from all reference to an audience which is exacted of it; but that in some cases a sort of compromise may take place, and all the purposes of dramatic delight be attained by a judicious understanding, not too openly announced, between the ladies and gentlemen — on both sides of the curtain.

SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS

So far from the position holding true, that great wit (or genius, in our modern way of speaking) has a necessary alliance with insanity, the greatest wits, on the contrary, will ever be found to be the sanest writers. It is impossible for the mind to conceive a mad Shakspeare. The greatness of wit, by which the poetic talent is here chiefly to be understood, manifests itself in the admirable balance of all the faculties. Madness is the disproportionate straining or excess of any one of them. "So strong a wit," says Cowley, speaking of a poetical friend,

"— did Nature to him frame,
As all things but his judgment overcame ;
His judgment like the heavenly moon did show,
Tempering that mighty sea below." ¹

The ground of the mistake is, that men, finding in the raptures of the higher poetry a condition of exaltation, to which they have no parallel in their own experience, besides the spurious resemblance of it in dreams and fevers, impute a state of dreaminess and fever to the poet. But the true poet dreams being awake. He is not possessed by his subject, but has dominion over it. In the groves of Eden he walks familiar as in his native paths. He ascends the empyrean heaven, and is not intoxicated. He treads the burning marl without dismay ; he wins his flight without self-loss through realms of chaos "and old night."² Or if, abandoning himself to that severer chaos of a "human mind untuned," he is content awhile to be mad with Lear,³ or to hate mankind (a sort of madness) with Timon,⁴

neither is that madness, nor this misanthropy, so unchecked, but that — never letting the reins of reason wholly go, while most he seems to do so — he has his better genius still whispering at his ear, with the good servant Kent⁵ suggesting saner counsels, or with the honest Steward Flavius⁶ recommending kindlier resolutions. Where he seems most to recede from humanity, he will be found the truest to it. From beyond the scope of nature if he summon possible existences, he subjugates them to the law of her consistency. He is beautifully loyal to that sovereign directress, even when he appears most to betray and desert her. His ideal tribes submit to policy; his very monsters are tamed to his hand, even as that wild sea-brood, shepherded by Proteus.⁷ He tames and he clothes them with attributes of flesh and blood, till they wonder at themselves, like Indian Islanders forced to submit to European vesture. Caliban,⁸ the Witches,⁹ are as true to the laws of their own nature (ours with a difference), as Othello, Hamlet, and Macbeth. Herein the great and the little wits are differenced; that if the latter wander ever so little from nature or actual existence, they lose themselves, and their readers. Their phantoms are lawless; their visions nightmares. They do not create, which implies shaping and consistency. Their imaginations are not active — for to be active is to call something into act and form — but passive, as men in sick dreams. For the super-natural, or something super-added to what we know of nature, they give you the plainly non-natural. And if this were all, and that these mental hallucinations were discoverable only in the treatment of subjects out of nature, or transcending it, the judgment might with some plea

be pardoned if it ran riot, and a little wantonised : but even in the describing of real and every-day life, that which is before their eyes, one of these lesser wits shall more deviate from nature — show more of that inconsequence, which has a natural alliance with frenzy — than a great genius in his “maddest fits,” as Wither¹⁰ somewhere calls them. We appeal to any one that is acquainted with the common run of Lane’s novels,¹¹ — as they existed some twenty or thirty years back, — those scanty intellectual viands of the whole female reading public, till a happier genius arose, and expelled for ever the innutritious phantoms, — whether he has not found his brain more “betossed,”¹² his memory more puzzled, his sense of when and where more confounded, among the improbable events, the incoherent incidents, the inconsistent characters, or no-characters, of some third-rate love intrigue — where the persons shall be a Lord Glendamour and a Miss Rivers, and the scene only alternate between Bath and Bond Street — a more bewildering dreaminess induced upon him, than he has felt wandering over all the fairy grounds of Spenser. In the productions we refer to, nothing but names and places is familiar ; the persons are neither of this world nor of any other conceivable one ; an endless string of activities without purpose, or purposes destitute of motive : — we meet phantoms in our known walks ; *fantasques* only christened. In the poet we have names which announce fiction ; and we have absolutely no place at all, for the things and persons of the Fairy Queen prate not of their “whereabout.”¹³ But in their inner nature, and the law of their speech and actions, we are at home and upon acquainted ground. The one turns life into a dream ;

the other to the wildest dreams gives the sobrieties of every-day occurrences. By what subtile art of tracing the mental processes it is effected, we are not philosophers enough to explain, but in that wonderful episode of the cave of Mammon,¹⁴ in which the Money God¹⁵ appears first in the lowest form of a miser, is then a worker of metals, and becomes the god of all the treasures of the world: and has a daughter, Ambition, before whom all the world kneels for favours, — with the Hesperian fruit,¹⁶ the waters of Tantalus,¹⁷ with Pilate washing his hands vainly,¹⁸ but not impertinently, in the same stream, — that we should be at one moment in the cave of an old hoarder of treasures, at the next at the forge of the Cyclops,¹⁹ in a palace and yet in hell, all at once, with the shifting mutations of the most rambling dream, and our judgment yet all the time awake, and neither able nor willing to detect the fallacy, — is a proof of that hidden sanity which still guides the poet in the widest seeming aberrations.

It is not enough to say that the whole episode is a copy of the mind's conceptions in sleep; it is, in some sort — but what a copy! Let the most romantic of us, that has been entertained all night with the spectacle of some wild and magnificent vision, recombine it in the morning, and try it by his waking judgment. That which appeared so shifting, and yet so coherent, while that faculty was passive, when it comes under cool examination, shall appear so reasonless and so unlinked, that we are ashamed to have been so deluded; and to have taken, though but in sleep, a monster for a god. But the transitions in this episode are every whit as violent as in the most extravagant dream, and yet the waking judgment ratifies them.

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

Sera tamen respexit

Libertas.

Vicen.¹

A Clerk I was in London gay.

O'Keefe.²

IF peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life — thy shining youth — in the irksome confinement of an office ; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite ; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holydays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood ; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six and thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant playtime, and the frequently intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours' a-day attendance at a counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content — doggedly content, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself ; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers — the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me.

Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a week-day saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful — are shut out. No book-stalls deliciously to idle over. No busy faces to re-create the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by — the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances — or half-happy at best — of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour; and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day looked anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an

illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thralldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L——,^s the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one,

I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock) I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me, — when to my utter astonishment B——,⁴ the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!), and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary — a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home — for ever. This noble benefit — gratitude forbids me to conceal their names — I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world — the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.⁵

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity ; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the Old Bastile,⁷ suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity — for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue ; I could see no end of my possessions ; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient ; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holydays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away ; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holydays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away, but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candlelight Time, I used to weary out my head and eye-sight in by-gone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure ; I let it come to me. I am like the man

——— that's born, and has his years come to him,
In some green desert.⁸

"Years," you will say ; " what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon ? He has already told us he is past fifty."

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself ; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting House. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year been so closely associated — being suddenly removed from them — they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy, by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death : —

——— 'T was but just now he went away ;
I have not since had time to shed a tear ;
And yet the distance does the same appear
As if he had been a thousand years from me.
Time takes no measure in Eternity.⁹

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since ; to visit my old desk-fellows — my co-brethren of the quill — that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk ; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——l take me if I did not feel some remorse — beast, if I had not, — at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six and thirty years, that smoothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged then after all ? or was I a coward simply ? Well, it is too late to repent ; and I also know, that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell, Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly ! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly ! Pl——, officious to do, and to volunteer good services ! ¹⁰ — and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham ¹¹ or a Whittington ¹² of old stately House of Merchants ; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one half the year supplied the place of the sun's light ; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, fare-

well! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my "works!" There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas¹³ left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian,¹⁴ from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural to me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at eleven o'clock in the day in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine picture in the morning. Was it ever otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill? Where is Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six and thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints¹⁵ now vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles.¹⁶ It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to

a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week, or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days ; in its distance from, or propinquity to the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings,¹⁷ my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, &c. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed the Ethiop white? What is gone of Black Monday? All days are the same. Sunday itself — that unfortunate failure of a holiday as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it — is melted down into a week day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge cantle which it used to seem to cut out of the holyday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor¹⁸ this fine May-morning. It is Lucretian pleasure¹⁹ to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring ; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round — and what is it all for? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO ; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake

come and swallow up those accursed cotton mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.²⁰

I am no longer * * * * *, clerk to the firm of, &c. I am Retired Leisure.²¹ I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate*²² air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.*²³ I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself.

OLD CHINA¹

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I enquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture gallery. I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying, that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play, and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then — why should I now have? — to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective — a china tea-cup.

I like to see my old friends — whom distance cannot diminish — figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still — for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, — which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, had made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin,² handing tea to a lady from a salver — two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another — for likeness is identity on tea-cups — is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the

hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead — a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on — if far or near can be predicated of their world — see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.³

Here — a cow and rabbit couchant, and co-extensive — so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.⁴

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson⁵ (which we are old fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa miracula*⁶ upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort — when a passing sentiment seemed to overshadow the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.⁷

“I wish the good old times would come again,” she said, “when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean, that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state” — so she was pleased to ramble on — “in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!) — we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might

spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it."

"Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so thread-bare — and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher,⁸ which you dragged home late at night from Barker's⁹ in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington,¹⁰ fearing you should be too late — and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures — and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome — and when you presented it to me — and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it) — and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak — was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity, with which you flaunted it about in that overworn suit — your old corbeau — for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen — or sixteen shillings was it? — a great affair we thought it then — which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy

any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now."

"When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Lionardo,¹¹ which we christened the 'Lady Blanch;' when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money — and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture — was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's,¹² and buy a wilderness of Lionardos. Yet do you?"

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield,¹³ and Potter's Bar,¹⁴ and Waltham,¹⁵ when we had a holyday — holydays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich — and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad — and how you would pry about at noon-tide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store — only paying for the ale that you must call for — and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth — and wish for such another honest hostess, as Izaak Walton¹⁶ has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a-fishing — and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us — but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savorily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now, — when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom moreover, we *ride* part of the way — and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense — which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country

snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome."

"You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the *Battle of Hexham*,¹⁷ and the *Surrender of Calais*,¹⁷ and *Bannister*¹⁸ and *Mrs. Bland*¹⁸ in the *Children in the Wood*¹⁹ — when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery — where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me — and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me — and the pleasure was the better for a little shame — and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with *Rosalind in Arden*,²⁰ or with *Viola at the Court of Illyria*?²⁰ You used to say, that the Gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially — that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going — that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage — because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then — and I appeal to you, whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation, than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough, — but there was still a law of civility to woman recognised to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages — and

how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat, and the play, afterwards! Now we can only pay our money and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then — but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.”

“There was pleasure in eating strawberries, before they became quite common — in the first dish of peas, while they were yet dear — to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can you have now? If we were to treat ourselves now — that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat — when two people living together, as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like; while each apologises, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now — what I mean by the word — we never do make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

“I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet, — and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings — many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much — or that we had not spent so much — or that it was impossible we should spend so much

next year — and still we found our slender capital decreasing — but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future — and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now) we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with ‘lusty brimmers’²¹ (as you used to quote it out of *heartly cheerful Mr. Cotton*, as you called him), we used to welcome in the ‘coming guest.’ Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year — no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us.”

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein, I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of a poor — hundred pounds a year. “It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraid we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened, and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other, if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power — those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straiten — with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride, where we formerly walked : live better, and lie softer — and

shall be wise to do so — than we had means to do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return — could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a-day — could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them — could the good old one-shilling gallery days return — they are dreams, my cousin, now — but could you and I at this moment, instead of this quiet argument, by our well-carpeted fire-side, sitting on this luxurious sofa — be once more struggling up those inconvenient staircases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers — could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours — and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe*, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us — I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Cræsus²² had, or the great Jew R——²³ is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half-Madonaish chit of a lady in that very blue summer house.”

POPULAR FALLACIES¹

THAT A MAN MUST NOT LAUGH AT HIS OWN JEST

THE severest exaction surely ever invented upon the self-denial of poor human nature! This is to expect a gentleman to give a treat without partaking of it; to sit esurient at his own table, and commend the flavour of his venison upon the absurd strength of his never touching it himself. On the contrary, we love to see a wag *taste* his own joke to his party; to watch a quirk, or a merry conceit, flickering upon the lips some seconds before the tongue is delivered of it. If it be good, fresh, and racy — begotten of the occasion; if he that utters it never thought it before, he is naturally the first to be tickled with it; and any suppression of such complacence we hold to be churlish and insulting. What does it seem to imply, but that your company is weak or foolish enough to be moved by an image or a fancy, that shall stir you not at all, or but faintly? This is exactly the humour of the fine gentleman in Mandeville,² who, while he dazzles his guests with the display of some costly toy, affects himself to “see nothing considerable in it.”

THAT THE WORST PUNS ARE THE BEST

If by the worst be only meant the most far-fetched and startling, we agree to it. A pun is not bound by the laws which limit nicer wit. It is a pistol let off at the ear; not a feather to tickle the intellect. It is an antic which does not stand upon manners, but comes bounding into the presence, and does not show the less

comic for being dragged in sometimes by the head and shoulders. What though it limp a little, or prove defective in one leg — all the better. A pun may easily be too curious and artificial. Who has not at one time or other been at a party of professors (himself perhaps an old offender in that line), where, after ringing a round of the most ingenious conceits, every man contributing his shot, and some there the most expert shooters of the day; after making a poor *word* run the gauntlet till it is ready to drop; after hunting and winding it through all the possible ambages of similar sounds; after squeezing and hauling, and tugging at it, till the very milk of it will not yield a drop further, — suddenly some obscure, unthought-of fellow in a corner, who was never 'prentice to the trade, whom the company for very pity passed over, as we do by a known poor man when a money-subscription is going round, no one calling upon him for his quota — has all at once come out with something so whimsical, yet so pertinent; so brazen in its pretensions, yet so impossible to be denied; so exquisitely good, and so deplorably bad, at the same time, — that it has proved a Robin Hood's shot; any thing ulterior to that is despaired of; and the party breaks up, unanimously voting it to be the very worst (that is, best) pun of the evening. This species of wit is the better for not being perfect in all its parts. What it gains in completeness, it loses in naturalness. The more exactly it satisfies the critical, the less hold it has upon some other faculties. The puns which are most entertaining are those which will least bear an analysis. Of this kind is the following, recorded with a sort of stigma, in one of Swift's Miscellanies.

An Oxford scholar, meeting a porter who was carrying a hare through the streets, accosted him with this extraordinary question : “ Prithee, friend, is that thy own hare, or a wig ? ”

There is no excusing this, and no resisting it. A man might blur ten sides of paper in attempting a defence of it against a critic who should be laughter-proof. The quibble in itself is not considerable. It is only a new turn given, by a little false pronunciation, to a very common, though not very courteous inquiry. Put by one gentleman to another at a dinner-party, it would have been vapid ; to the mistress of the house, it would have shown much less wit than rudeness. We must take in the totality of time, place, and person ; the pert look of the inquiring scholar, the desponding looks of the puzzled porter ; the one stopping at leisure, the other hurrying on with his burthen ; the innocent though rather abrupt tendency of the first member of the question, with the utter and inextricable irrelevancy of the second ; the place — a public street, not favourable to frivolous investigations ; the affrontive quality of the primitive inquiry (the common question) invidiously transferred to the derivative (the new turn given to it) in the implied satire ; namely, that few of that tribe are expected to eat of the good things which they carry, they being in most countries considered rather as the temporary trustees than owners of such dainties, — which the fellow was beginning to understand ; but then the *wig* again comes in, and he can make nothing of it ; all put together constitute a picture : Hogarth could have made it intelligible on canvas.

Yet nine out of ten critics will pronounce this a

very bad pun, because of the defectiveness in the concluding member, which is its very beauty, and constitutes the surprise. The same persons shall cry up for admirable the cold quibble from Virgil about the broken Cremona; * because it is made out in all its parts, and leaves nothing to the imagination. We venture to call it cold; because of thousands who have admired it, it would be difficult to find one who has heartily chuckled at it. As appealing to the judgment merely (setting the risible faculty aside), we must pronounce it a monument of curious felicity. But as some stories are said to be too good to be true, it may with equal truth be asserted of this bi-verbal allusion, that it is too good to be natural. One cannot help suspecting that the incident was invented to fit the line. It would have been better had it been less perfect. Like some Virgilian hemistichs, it has suffered by filling up. The *nimum Vicina* was enough in conscience; the *Cremonæ* afterwards loads it. It is in fact a double pun; and we have always observed that a superfetation in this sort of wit is dangerous. When a man has said a good thing, it is seldom politic to follow it up. We do not care to be cheated a second time; or, perhaps, the mind of man (with reverence be it spoken) is not capacious enough to lodge two puns at a time. The impression, to be forcible, must be simultaneous and undivided.

THAT WE MUST NOT LOOK A GIFT-HORSE IN
THE MOUTH

Nor a lady's age in the parish register. We hope we have more delicacy than to do either; but some

* Swift's.

faces spare us the trouble of these *dental* inquiries. And what if the beast, which my friend would force upon my acceptance, prove, upon the face of it, a sorry Rosinante,⁴ a lean, ill-favoured jade, whom no gentleman could think of setting up in his stables? Must I, rather than not be obliged to my friend, make her a companion to Eclipse⁵ or Lightfoot? A horse-giver, no more than a horse-seller, has a right to palm his spavined article upon us for good ware. An equivalent is expected in either case; and, with my own good will, I would no more be cheated out of my thanks than out of my money. Some people have a knack of putting upon you gifts of no real value, to engage you to substantial gratitude. We thank them for nothing. Our friend Mitis carries this humour of never refusing a present, to the very point of absurdity—if it were possible to couple the ridiculous with so much mistaken delicacy, and real good nature. Not an apartment in his fine house (and he has a true taste in household decorations), but is stuffed up with some preposterous print or mirror—the worst adapted to his panels that may be—the presents of his friends that know his weakness; while his noble Vandykes⁶ are displaced, to make room for a set of daubs, the work of some wretched artist of his acquaintance, who, having had them returned upon his hands for bad likenesses, finds his account in bestowing them here gratis. The good creature has not the heart to mortify the painter at the expense of an honest refusal. It is pleasant (if it did not vex one at the same time) to see him sitting in his dining parlour, surrounded with obscure aunts and cousins to God knows whom, while the true Lady Marys and Lady Bettys

of his own honourable family, in favour to these adopted frights, are consigned to the staircase and the lumber-room. In like manner his goodly shelves are one by one stript of his favourite old authors, to give place to a collection of presentation copies — the flour and bran of modern poetry. A presentation copy, reader, — if haply you are yet innocent of such favours, — is a copy of a book which does not sell, sent you by the author, with his foolish autograph at the beginning of it ; for which, if a stranger, he only demands your friendship ; if a brother author he expects from you a book of yours, which does sell, in return. We can speak to experience, having by us a tolerable assortment of these gift-horses. Not to ride a metaphor to death — we are willing to acknowledge, that in some gifts there is sense. A duplicate out of a friend's library (where he has more than one copy of a rare author) is intelligible. There are favours, short of the pecuniary — a thing not fit to be hinted at among gentlemen — which confer as much grace upon the acceptor as the offerer ; the kind, we confess, which is most to our palate, is of those little conciliatory missives, which for their vehicle generally choose a hamper — little odd presents of game, fruit, perhaps wine — though it is essential to the delicacy of the latter that it be home-made. We love to have our friend in the country sitting thus at our table by proxy ; to apprehend his presence (though a hundred miles may be between us) by a turkey, whose goodly aspect reflects to us his “ plump corpusculum ; ” to taste him in grouse or woodcock ; to feel him gliding down in the toast peculiar to the latter : to concorporate him in a slice of Canterbury brawn. This is indeed to have him

within ourselves ; to know him intimately : such participation is methinks unitive, as the old theologians phrase it. For these considerations we should be sorry if certain restrictive regulations,⁷ which are thought to bear hard upon the peasantry of this country, were entirely done away with. A hare, as the law now stands, makes many friends. Caius conciliates Titius (knowing his *goût*) with a leash of partridges. Titius (suspecting his partiality for them) passes them to Lucius ; who in his turn, preferring his friend's relish to his own, makes them over to Marcius ; till in their ever widening progress, and round of unconscious circum-migration, they distribute the seeds of harmony over half a parish. We are well disposed to this kind of sensible remembrances ; and are the less apt to be taken by those little airy tokens — impalpable to the palate — which, under the names of rings, lockets, keep-sakes, amuse some people's fancy mightily. We could never away with these indigestible trifles. They are the very kickshaws and foppery of friendship.

THAT HOME IS HOME THOUGH IT IS NEVER SO
HOMELY

Homes there are, we are sure, that are no homes ; the home of the very poor man, and another which we shall speak to presently. Crowded places of cheap entertainment, and the benches of ale-houses, if they could speak, might bear mournful testimony to the first. To them the very poor man resorts for an image of the home, which he cannot find at home. For a starved grate, and a scanty firing, that is not enough to keep alive the natural heat in the fingers of so many shivering children with their mother, he finds in the

depths of winter always a blazing hearth, and a hob to warm his pittance of beer by. Instead of the clamours of a wife, made gaunt by famishing, he meets with a cheerful attendance beyond the merits of the trifle which he can afford to spend. He has companions which his home denies him, for the very poor man has no visitors. He can look into the goings on of the world, and speak a little to politics. At home there are no politics stirring, but the domestic. All interests, real or imaginary, all topics that should expand the mind of man, and connect him to a sympathy with general existence, are crushed in the absorbing considerations of food to be obtained for the family. Beyond the price of bread, news is senseless and impertinent. At home there is no larder. Here there is at least a show of plenty; and while he cooks his lean scrap of butcher's meat before the common bars, or munches his humbler cold viands, his relishing bread and cheese with an onion, in a corner, where no one reflects upon his poverty, he has a sight of the substantial joint providing for the landlord and his family. He takes an interest in the dressing of it; and while he assists in removing the trivet from the fire, he feels that there is such a thing as beef and cabbage, which he was beginning to forget at home. All this while he deserts his wife and children. But what wife, and what children? Prosperous men, who object to this desertion, image to themselves some clean contented family like that which they go home to. But look at the countenance of the poor wives who follow and persecute their good man to the door of the public house, which he is about to enter, when something like shame would restrain him, if stronger mis-

ery did not induce him to pass the threshold. That face, ground by want, in which every cheerful, every conversable lineament has been long effaced by misery, — is that a face to stay at home with? is it more a woman, or a wild cat? alas! it is the face of the wife of his youth, that once smiled upon him. It can smile no longer. What comforts can it share? what burthens can it lighten? Oh, 'tis a fine thing to talk of the humble meal shared together! But what if there be no bread in the cupboard? The innocent prattle of his children takes out the sting of a man's poverty. But the children of the very poor do not prattle. It is none of the least frightful features in that condition, that there is no childishness in its dwellings. Poor people, said a sensible old nurse to us once, do not bring up their children; they drag them up. The little careless darling of the wealthier nursery, in their hovel is transformed betimes into a premature reflecting person. No one has time to dandle it, no one thinks it worth while to coax it, to soothe it, to toss it up and down, to humour it. There is none to kiss away its tears. If it cries, it can only be beaten. It has been prettily said that "a babe is fed with milk and praise."^s But the aliment of this poor babe was thin, unnourishing; the return to its little baby-tricks, and efforts to engage attention, bitter ceaseless objurgation. It never had a toy, or knew what a coral meant. It grew up without the lullaby of nurses, it was a stranger to the patient fondle, the hushing caress, the attracting novelty, the costlier plaything, or the cheaper off-hand contrivance to divert the child; the prattled nonsense (best sense to it), the wise impertinencies, the wholesome lies, the apt story inter-

posed, that puts a stop to present sufferings, and awakens the passion of young wonder. It was never sung to — no one ever told to it a tale of the nursery. It was dragged up, to live or to die as it happened. It had not young dreams. It broke at once into the iron realities of life. A child exists not for the very poor as any object of dalliance ; it is only another mouth to be fed, a pair of little hands to be betimes inured to labour. It is the rival, till it can be the co-operator, for food with the parent. It is never his mirth, his diversion, his solace ; it never makes him young again, with recalling his young times. The children of the very poor have no young times. It makes the very heart to bleed to overhear the casual street-talk between a poor woman and her little girl, a woman of the better sort of poor, in a condition rather above the squalid beings which we have been contemplating. It is not of toys, of nursery books, of summer holidays (fitting that age) ; of the promised sight, or play ; of praised sufficiency at school. It is of mangling and clear-starching, of the price of coals, or of potatoes. The questions of the child, that should be the very outpourings of curiosity in idleness, are marked with forecast and melancholy providence. It has come to be a woman, — before it was a child. It has learned to go to market ; it chaffers, it haggles, it envies, it murmurs ; it is knowing, acute, sharpened ; it never prattles. Had we not reason to say, that the home of the very poor is no home ?

There is yet another home,⁹ which we are constrained to deny to be one. It has a larder, which the home of the poor man wants ; its fireside conveniences, of which the poor dream not. But with all this, it is no home.

It is—the house of the man that is infested with many visitors. May we be branded for the veriest churl, if we deny our heart to the many noble-hearted friends that at times exchange their dwelling for our poor roof! It is not of guests that we complain, but of endless, purposeless visitants; droppers in, as they are called. We sometimes wonder from what sky they fall. It is the very error of the position of our lodging; its horoscope was ill calculated, being just situate in a medium—a plaguy suburban midspace—fitted to catch idlers from town or country. We are older than we were, and age is easily put out of its way. We have fewer sands in our glass to reckon upon, and we cannot brook to see them drop in endlessly succeeding impertinences. At our time of life, to be alone sometimes is as needful as sleep. It is the refreshing sleep of the day. The growing infirmities of age manifest themselves in nothing more strongly, than in an inveterate dislike of interruption. The thing which we are doing, we wish to be permitted to do. We have neither much knowledge nor devices;¹⁰ but there are fewer in the place to which we hasten. We are not willingly put out of our way, even at a game of ninepins. While youth was, we had vast reversions in time future; we are reduced to a present pittance, and obliged to economise in that article. We bleed away our moments now as hardly as our ducats. We cannot bear to have our thin wardrobe eaten and fretted into by moths. We are willing to barter our good time with a friend, who gives us in exchange his own. Herein is the distinction between the genuine guest and the visitant. This latter takes your good time, and gives you his bad in exchange. The guest is domestic

to you as your good cat, or household bird ; the visitant is your fly, that flaps in at your window, and out again, leaving nothing but a sense of disturbance, and victuals spoiled. The inferior functions of life begin to move heavily. We cannot concoct our food with interruptions. Our chief meal, to be nutritive, must be solitary. With difficulty we can eat before a guest ; and never understood what the relish of public feasting meant. Meats have no sapor, nor digestion fair play, in a crowd. The unexpected coming in of a visitant stops the machine. There is a punctual generation who time their calls to the precise commencement of your dining-hour — not to eat — but to see you eat. Our knife and fork drop instinctively, and we feel that we have swallowed our latest morsel. Others again show their genius, as we have said, in knocking the moment you have just sat down to a book. They have a peculiar compassionate sneer, with which they “hope that they do not interrupt your studies.” Though they flutter off the next moment, to carry their importunences to the nearest student that they can call their friend, the tone of the book is spoiled ; we shut the leaves, and, with Dante’s lovers,¹¹ read no more that day. It were well if the effect of intrusion were simply co-extensive with its presence ; but it mars all the good hours afterwards. These scratches in appearance leave an orifice that closes not hastily. “It is a prostitution of the bravery of friendship,” says worthy Bishop Taylor,¹² “to spend it upon impertinent people, who are, it may be, loads to their families, but can never ease my loads.” This is the secret of their gaddings, their visits, and morning calls. They too have homes, which are — no homes.

THAT WE SHOULD RISE WITH THE LARK

At what precise minute that little airy musician doffs his night gear, and prepares to tune up his unseasonable matins, we are not naturalists enough to determine. But for a mere human gentleman — that has no orchestra business to call him from his warm bed to such preposterous exercises — we take ten, or half after ten (eleven, of course, during this Christmas solstice), to be the very earliest hour, at which he can begin to think of abandoning his pillow. To think of it, we say; for to do it in earnest, requires another half-hour's good consideration. Not but there are pretty sun-risings, as we are told, and such like gawds, abroad in the world, in summer time especially, some hours before what we have assigned; which a gentleman may see, as they say, only for getting up. But, having been tempted once or twice, in earlier life, to assist at those ceremonies, we confess our curiosity abated. We are no longer ambitious of being the sun's courtiers, to attend at his morning levees. We hold the good hours of the dawn too sacred to waste them upon such observances; which have in them, besides, something Pagan and Persic. To say truth, we never anticipated our usual hour, or got up with the sun (as 'tis called), to go a journey, or upon a foolish whole day's pleasuring, but we suffered for it all the long hours after in listlessness and headaches; Nature herself sufficiently declaring her sense of our presumption in aspiring to regulate our frail waking courses by the measures of that celestial and sleepless traveller. We deny not that there is something sprightly and vigorous, at the outset especially, in these break-of-day

excursions. It is flattering to get the start of a lazy world ; to conquer death by proxy in his image. But the seeds of sleep and mortality are in us ; and we pay usually in strange qualms, before night falls, the penalty of the unnatural inversion. Therefore, while the busy part of mankind are fast huddling on their clothes, are already up and about their occupations, content to have swallowed their sleep by wholesale ; we choose to linger a-bed, and digest our dreams. It is the very time to re-combine the wandering images, which night in a confused mass presented ; to snatch them from forgetfulness ; to shape, and mould them. Some people have no good of their dreams. Like fast feeders, they gulp them too grossly, to taste them curiously. We love to chew the cud of a foregone vision ; to collect the scattered rays of a brighter phantasm, or act over again, with firmer nerves, the sadder nocturnal tragedies ; to drag into day-light a struggling and half-vanishing night-mare ; to handle and examine the terrors, or the airy solaces. We have too much respect for these spiritual communications, to let them go so lightly. We are not so stupid, or so careless, as that Imperial forgetter¹³ of his dreams, that we should need a seer to remind us of the form of them. They seem to us to have as much significance as our waking concerns ; or rather to import us more nearly, as more nearly we approach by years to the shadowy world, whither we are hastening. We have shaken hands with the world's business ; we have done with it ; we have discharged ourself of it. Why should we get up ? we have neither suit to solicit, nor affairs to manage. The drama has shut in upon us at the fourth act. We have nothing here to expect, but

in a short time a sick bed, and a dismissal. We delight to anticipate death by such shadows as night affords. We are already half acquainted with ghosts. We were never much in the world. Disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions. Our spirits showed grey before our hairs. The mighty changes of the world already appear as but the vain stuff out of which dramas are composed. We have asked no more of life than what the mimic images in play-houses present us with. Even those types have waxed fainter. Our clock appears to have struck. We are *SUPERANNUATED*. In this dearth of mundane satisfaction, we contract politic alliances with shadows. It is good to have friends at court. The abstracted media of dreams seem no ill introduction to that spiritual presence, upon which, in no long time, we expect to be thrown. We are trying to know a little of the usages of that colony; to learn the language, and the faces we shall meet with there, that we may be the less awkward at our first coming among them. We willingly call a phantom our fellow, as knowing we shall soon be of their dark companionship. Therefore, we cherish dreams. We try to spell in them the alphabet of the invisible world; and think we know already, how it shall be with us. Those uncouth shapes, which, while we clung to flesh and blood, affrighted us, have become familiar. We feel attenuated into their meagre essences, and have given the hand of half-way approach to incorporeal being. We once thought life to be something; but it has unaccountably fallen from us before its time. Therefore we choose to dally with visions. The sun has no purposes of ours to light us to. Why should we get up?

THAT WE SHOULD LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB

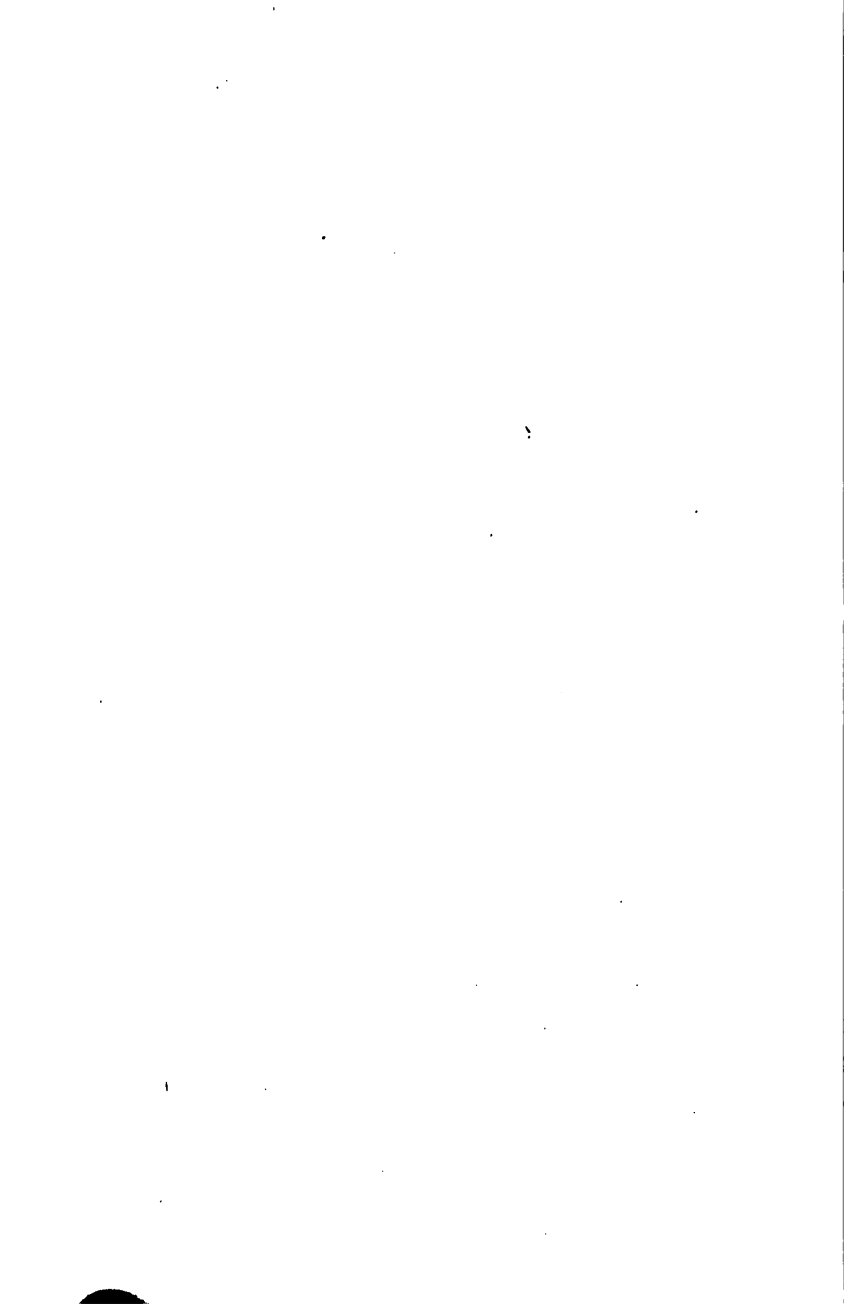
We could never quite understand the philosophy of this arrangement, or the wisdom of our ancestors in sending us for instruction to these woolly bedfellows. A sheep, when it is dark, has nothing to do but to shut his silly eyes, and sleep if he can. Man found out long sixes. — Hail candle-light ! without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindest luminary of the three — if we may not rather style thee their radiant deputy, mild viceroy of the moon ! — We love to read, talk, sit silent, eat, drink, sleep, by candle-light. They are everybody's sun and moon. This is our peculiar and household planet. Wanting it, what savage unsocial nights must our ancestors have spent, wintering in caves and unilluminated fastnesses ! They must have lain about and grumbled at one another in the dark. What repartees could have passed, when you must have felt about for a smile, and handled a neighbour's cheek to be sure that he understood it ? This accounts for the seriousness of the elder poetry. It has a sombre cast (try Hesiod ¹⁴ or Ossian ¹⁵), derived from the tradition of those unlantern'd nights. Jokes came in with candles. We wonder how they saw to pick up a pin, if they had any. How did they sup ? what a *mélange* of chance carving they must have made of it ! — here one had got the leg of a goat, when he wanted a horse's shoulder — there another had dipt his scooped palm in a kid-skin of wild honey, when he meditated right mare's milk. There is neither good eating nor drinking in fresco. Who, even in these civilised times, has never experienced this, when at some economic table he has commenced dining after

dusk, and waited for the flavour till the lights came? The senses absolutely give and take reciprocally. Can you tell pork from veal in the dark? or distinguish Sherris from pure Malaga? Take away the candle from the smoking man; by the glimmering of the left ashes, he knows that he is still smoking, but he knows it only by an inference; till the restored light, coming in aid of the olfactories, reveals to both senses the full aroma. Then how he redoubles his puffs! how he burnishes! — There is absolutely no such thing as reading, but by a candle. We have tried the affectation of a book at noon-day in gardens, and in sultry arbours; but it was labour thrown away. Those gay motes in the beam come about you, hovering and teasing, like many coquettes, that will have you all to their self, and are jealous of your abstractions. By the midnight taper, the writer digests his meditations. By the same light, we must approach to their perusal, if we would catch the flame, the odour. It is a mockery, all that is reported of the influential Phœbus. No true poem ever owed its birth to the sun's light. They are abstracted works —

“ Things that were born, when none but the still night,
And his dumb candle, saw his pinching throes.” ¹⁶

Marry, daylight — daylight might furnish the images, the crude material; but for the fine shapings, the true turning and filing (as mine author hath it), they must be content to hold their inspiration of the candle. The mild internal light, that reveals them, like fires on the domestic hearth, goes out in the sun-shine. Night and silence call out the starry fancies. Milton's Morning Hymn in Paradise,¹⁷ we would hold a good wager, was

penned at midnight ; and Taylor's rich description of a sun-rise ¹⁸ smells decidedly of the taper. Even ourselves, in these our humbler lucubrations, tune our best measured cadences (Prose has her cadences) not unfrequently to the charm of the drowsier watchman, " blessing the doors ;" ¹⁹ or the wild sweeps of wind at midnight. Even now a loftier speculation than we have yet attempted, courts our endeavours. We would indite something about the Solar System. — *Betty, bring the candles.* /



NOTES

ANY edition of the *Essays of Elia* to-day must acknowledge its indebtedness for explanatory matter to the editions of Canon Ainger (1883) and E. V. Lucas (1903). Mr. Lucas's edition ought, above all others, to be accessible to students, not only for the sake of its full annotation, but for new information concerning the Lambs there brought to light, for its most zealous tracing of quotations used by Lamb, and for its interesting reproductions of title-pages and of pictures alluded to by Lamb. In this text Canon Ainger's notes are marked by the initial, Mr. Lucas's by the full name, while Lamb's own notes appear at the foot of the text pages.

THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE

(*London Magazine*, August, 1820.)

NOTE 1. Charles Lamb left Christ's Hospital in the year 1789, at the age of fourteen, and at some date within the next two years he obtained a situation in the South-Sea House. His father's employer, Samuel Salt, the Benchet of the Inner Temple, was a Deputy-Governor of the South-Sea House at the time, and it was doubtless by the influence of this kind friend that the appointment was obtained. Charles's elder brother, John, was already a clerk in the office. In the *Royal Calendar* for 1792, John Lamb's name appears as holding the position of Deputy-Accountant. Other of the names mentioned by Lamb in this Essay are also found in the official records of the day, — John Tipp, on whose promotion to the office of Accountant (as "John Tipp, Esq."), John Lamb succeeded to the post just mentioned; W. Evans, Deputy-Cashier in 1791; Thomas Tame, Deputy-Cashier in 1793; and Richard Plumer, Deputy-Secretary in 1800. Lamb's fondness for gratuitous mystification is thus curiously illustrated in the insinuation towards the close of the Essay that the names he has recorded are fictitious, after all. Lamb's old colleague, Elia, whose name he borrowed, has not (as far as I am aware) been yet traced in the annals of the office. But he probably held, like Lamb himself, a very subordinate position.

A full account of the famous South-Sea Bubble will be found in Lord Stanhope's History, and also in Chambers's *Book of Days*. For an account of the constitution of the Company at the end of the last century, Hughson's *Walks through London* (1805) may be consulted. He says: "Notwithstanding the terms of the charter by which we are to look upon this Com-

pany as merchants, it is observable that they never carried on any considerable trade, and now they have no trade. They only receive interest for their capital which is in the hands of the Government, and £8000 out of the Treasury towards the expense attending the management of their affairs, which is done by a Governor, Sub-Governor, Deputy-Governor, and twenty-one Directors, annually chosen on the 6th of February by a majority of votes." Pennant (who is referred to in this Essay, and wrote in 1790) says: "In this (Threadneedle) Street also stands the South-Sea House, the place in which the Company did business, when it had any to transact." A.

NOTE 2. Bank of England.

NOTE 3. An inn in Bishopsgate Street, from which the north-bound coaches started.

NOTE 4. Northern suburbs where rents were low.

NOTE 5. Queen Anne (1702-1714); and George I (1714-1727), George II (1727-1760).

NOTE 6. Cf. Milton's *Comus*, l. 398.

NOTE 7. This is the name which Spenser (*Faerie Queene*, II, vii) and Milton (*Paradise Lost*, I, 678) give to Riches.

NOTE 8. The giant plot of Guy Fawkes (Guido Vaux) to blow up the house of Parliament, November 5, 1605.

NOTE 9. Cambria was the old Latin name for Wales.

NOTE 10. The English fops of the late eighteenth century were called Maccaronies.

NOTE 11. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, ii.

NOTE 12. A coffee-house on Fleet Street, now Anderton's Hotel.

NOTE 13. Thomas Pennant (1726-1798), a Welsh antiquary.

NOTE 14. Formerly in a corner of St. James's Park, London; filled up in 1770. Fair Rosamond was Jane Clifford, mistress of Henry II.

NOTE 15. Public gardens shaded by the mulberries planted by King James I, and much frequented by fashion in the seventeenth century. They occupied the site of Buckingham Palace.

NOTE 16. Cheapside. Water was brought here underground from Paddington.

NOTE 17. Hogarth, William (1697-1764), English painter. The scene of his "Noon" is a Huguenot chapel (now St. Mary's) in Hog Lane.

NOTE 18. Louis XIV of France (1643-1715), who, revoking the Edict of Nantes, drove thousands of Protestant families from France.

NOTE 19. A locality long notorious for poverty and crime. So called from a column with seven sun dials, which marked the meeting of seven streets.

NOTE 20. The entrance to the Houses of Parliament.

NOTE 21. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, VIII, 454.

NOTE 22. James Radcliffe, Earl of Derwentwater (1689-1716), supported the Pretender and was beheaded in London in 1716.

NOTE 23. Honor and consolation. Cf. Virgil's *Aeneid*, X, 859.

NOTE 24. Quoted from a passage in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, except that for Fielding's "schoolmaster" Lamb substitutes "accountant."

NOTE 25. Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, III, 17.

NOTE 26. The Midas of mythology, in a musical contest between Pan and Apollo, made the unpardonable mistake of adjudging the prize to Pan, and was punished by having his ears turned to asses' ears.

NOTE 27. Cf.

"Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour 's at the stake." *Hamlet*, IV, iv.

NOTE 28. Cf.

"And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death." *Macbeth*, V, v.

NOTE 29. Henry Man (1747-1799), author of many light trifles in verse and prose, and of one or two books. The two "forgotten volumes" — *Miscellaneous Works in Verse and Prose of the late Henry Man*, London, 1802 — are now before me. They contain a variety of light and amusing papers in verse and prose. The humour of them, however, is naturally still more out of date now than in Lamb's day. One of the epigrams found there may be said to have become classical, — that upon the two Earls (Spencer and Sandwich) who invented respectively "half a coat" and "half a dinner." Henry Man was Deputy-Secretary in 1793. A.

NOTE 30. A section of London where Milton lived (1646-1647) and wrote some of his shorter poems. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, III, 3.

NOTE 31. Two London newspapers of the eighteenth century.

NOTE 32. All the following names are connected with two struggles, — the American War of Independence, and John Wilkes's struggle with Parliament: William Pitt, Earl of Chatham (1708-1778); William Petty, Earl of Shelburne (1737-1805); Charles Wentworth, Marquis of Rockingham (1730-1782); William Howe, commander of the British forces in the American war (1729-1814); John Burgoyne, the British commander who surrendered (1777) to General Gates at Saratoga (c. 1722-1792); Sir Henry Clinton, who succeeded General Howe as commander-in-chief of the British army in 1778 (1738-1795).

NOTE 33. Augustus Keppel, an English admiral (1725-1786); John Wilkes, English politician, editor of the *North Briton* (1727-1797); John Sawbridge (c. 1732-1795), made lord mayor of London in 1775; William Bull (1738-1814), independent minister, friend of Cowper; John Dunning, Lord Ashburton (1731-1783); Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden (c. 1714-1794); Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond, a champion of the American colonies (1735-1806).

NOTE 34. Lamb had a special interest in the family bearing this name, because his grandmother, Mary Field, was for more than half a century housekeeper at the Dower House of the family, Blakesware in Hertfordshire. The present Mr. Plumer, of Allerton, Totness, a grandson of Richard Plumer of the South-Sea House, by no means acquiesces in the tradition here recorded as to his grandfather's origin. He believes that though the links are missing, Richard Plumer was descended in regular line from the Baronet, Sir Walter Plumer, who died at the end of the seventeenth century. Lamb's memory has failed him here in one respect. The "Bachelor Uncle," Walter Plumer, uncle of William Plumer of Blakesware, was most certainly not a bachelor (see the pedigree of the family in Cussan's *Hertfordshire*). Lamb is further inaccurate as to the connection of this Walter Plumer with the affair of the franks. A reference to Johnson's *Life of Cave* will show that it was Cave, and not Plumer, who was summoned before the House of Commons. Walter Plumer, Member for Oldborough and Appleby, had given a frank to the Duchess of Marlborough, which had been challenged by Cave, who held the post of Clerk of the Franks in the House of Commons. For this, Cave was cited before the House, as a Breach of Privilege.

In the passage on John Tipp, Lamb, speaking of his fine suite of rooms in Threadneedle Street, adds, "I know not who is the occupier of them now." When the Essay first appeared in the *London Magazine*, the note in brackets was appended. Thus we learn that John Lamb was still, in 1820, occupying rooms in the old building. A.

NOTE 35. "Maynard hang'd himself" (Lamb's "Key"). Mr. T. Maynard was chief clerk of the Old Annuities and Three Per Cents from 1788 to 1793. His name does not appear in the almanacs of the day after this date. A.

NOTE 36. Cf. *As You Like It*, II, vii.

NOTE 37. As a matter of fact they are not "fantastic," but are to be found in several different records.

NOTE 38. The Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew* says:—

"Why, sir, you know no house nor no such maid,
Nor no such men as you have reckon'd up,
As Stephen Sly, and old John Naps of Greece,
And Peter Turph, and Henry Pimpernell,
And twenty more such names and men as these
Which never were, nor no man ever saw."

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO

(*London Magazine*, November, 1820.)

NOTE 1. The first collected edition of Lamb's Prose and Verse appeared in the year 1818, published by C. and J. Ollier. Among other papers it contained one entitled *Recollections of*

Christ's Hospital. The Essay was a reprint from the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1813, where it originally owed its appearance to an alleged abuse of the presentation system in force at the Blue Coat School.

This earlier article on Christ's Hospital had been written in a serious and genuine vein of enthusiasm for the value and dignity of the old Foundation. Lamb now seems to have remembered that there were other aspects of schoolboy life under its shelter that might be profitably dealt with. The "poor friendless boy," in whose character he now writes, was his old schoolfellow Coleridge, and the general truth of the sketch is shown by Coleridge's own reference to his schooldays in the early chapters of his *Biographia Literaria*. "In my friendless wanderings on our leave-days (for I was an orphan, and had scarce any connections in London), highly was I delighted if any passenger, especially if he were dressed in black, would enter into conversation with me." A.

Lamb's love of mystification shows itself in this Essay in many forms. "Sweet Calne in Wiltshire" is a quite gratuitous substitution for Ottery St. Mary in Devonshire, the home after which young Coleridge did actually yearn. Coleridge did, however, reside for a time at Calne in later life. Moreover, as will be seen, the disguise of identity with Coleridge is dropped altogether towards the close of the Essay. The general account of the school here given it is interesting to compare with that given by Leigh Hunt in his autobiography. A.

NOTE 2. *Recollections of Christ's Hospital.*

NOTE 3. Randal Norris.

NOTE 4. There were originally two banian (or banyan) days — later, only one — in the British navy upon which the sailors were allowed to have no meat. The custom no longer exists.

NOTE 5. Horse flesh.

NOTE 6. The aunt, Sarah Lamb.

"I have not forgot
How thou didst love thy Charles, when he was yet
A prating schoolboy: I have not forgot
The busy joy on that important day,
When, childlike, the poor wanderer was content
To leave the bosom of parental love,
His childhood's play-place, and his early home,
For the rude fosterings of a stranger's hand,
Hard, uncouth tasks, and schoolboy's scanty fare.
How did thine eyes peruse him round and round
And hardly knew him in his yellow coats,
Red leathern belt, and gown of russet blue."

Lamb's Lines written on the Day of my Aunt's Funeral.

NOTE 7. The Royal Menagerie now in Regent's Park was formerly kept in the Tower.

NOTE 8. It was under Samuel Salt's roof that John Lamb and his family lived, and as the presentation to Christ's was

obtained from a friend of Salt's, Lamb considers it fair to speak of the old Benchet as the actual benefactor. A.

NOTE 9. Hodges (Lamb's "Key").

NOTE 10. Lamb speaks of this friend occasionally in his letters, but nothing is known of him beyond his name.

NOTE 11. This horse, called Incitatus, was fed from a golden manger, and one of Caligula's whims was to have him invested with consulship.

NOTE 12. Cf. Joshua vi, 13-16.

NOTE 13. John Perry, steward from 1761 to 1785.

NOTE 14. A description of the hall may be found in Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*, Chap. iii.

NOTE 15. A line apparently extemporized by Lamb as a translation of the passage in Virgil (*Æneid*, I, 464) to which he refers, "*animus pictura pascit inani*." A.

NOTE 16. As usual, a new quotation formed out of Lamb's general recollection of an old one. He had in his mind, no doubt, a passage in *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act I, Sc. iv):—

"It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh
Which some did die to look on." A.

NOTE 17. Perry was steward in Lamb's day (see the former Essay on Christ's Hospital). Leigh Hunt says of his successor: "The name of the steward, a thin stiff man of invincible formality of demeanour, admirably fitted to render encroachment impossible, was Hathaway. We of the grammar school used to call him 'the Yeoman,' on account of Shakespeare having married the daughter of a man of that name, designated as 'a substantial yeoman.'" A.

NOTE 18. Bedlam is a corruption of *Bethlehem*; the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, founded in the thirteenth century, was afterward used as an asylum for the insane.

NOTE 19. Howard's statue stands in St. Paul's Cathedral. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, I, iii.

NOTE 20. Literally, an act of faith (Portuguese). The term was applied in Spain and Portugal to the ceremony of burning heretics.

NOTE 21. Blue uniforms. Cf. Spenser's "watchet mantles."

NOTE 22. Cf. *The Inferno*, Cantos xxviii-xxx.

NOTE 23. Extreme punishments.

NOTE 24. The name San Benito was given to these garments because they were of the cut of those worn by the order of St. Benedict.

NOTE 25. Became upper master of Christ's in 1777. For the better side of Boyer's qualifications as a teacher, see Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, the passage beginning, "At school I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though at the same time a very severe master." Elsewhere Coleridge entirely confirms Lamb's and Leigh Hunt's accounts of Boyer's violent temper, and severe discipline. Lamb never reached the position of Grecian, but it is the tradition in Christ's Hos-

pital that he was under Boyer's instruction some time before leaving school. A.

NOTE 26. Some charming additional traits in this character, entirely confirming Lamb's account, will be found in Leigh Hunt's autobiography. "A man of a more handsome incompetence for his situation perhaps did not exist. He came late of a morning; went away soon in the afternoon; and used to walk up and down, languidly bearing his cane, as if it were a lily, and hearing our eternal *Dominuses* and *As in praesentis* with an air of ineffable endurance. Often he did not hear at all. It was a joke with us when any of our friends came to the door, and we asked his permission to go to them, to address him with some preposterous question wide of the mark; to which he used to assent. We would say, for instance, 'Are you not a great fool, sir?' or 'Is n't your daughter a pretty girl?' to which he would reply, 'Yes, child.' When he condescended to hit us with the cane, he made a face as if he were taking physic." A.

NOTE 27. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, III, ii.

NOTE 28. Cf. Ben Jonson's *Lines on Shakespeare*.

NOTE 29. The game is played by two, — one, the French, and the other, the English, — on a piece of paper covered with dots. Each player closes his eyes and dashes his pencil across the paper. The dots thus crossed out represent the number of the enemy which each has annihilated.

NOTE 30. Rousseau and John Locke included in their theories of education the modern principle that the *natural* disposition of the child should be considered in his development.

NOTE 31. A Roman fabulist of the first century, A. D.

NOTE 32. The slaves of the Spartan state, who were sometimes exhibited drunken as a warning to the Spartan youths.

NOTE 33. The pupils of Pythagoras, the Samite (c. 582–500 B. C.), banded themselves together by vows to keep all their discussions, discoveries, etc., from the outside world, and not to speak of them until they had listened to his lectures for five years.

NOTE 34. Cf. Judges vi, 36–38.

NOTE 35. Cf. Cowley's *The Complaint*.

NOTE 36. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, ii.

NOTE 37. An allusion to Virgil's *Aeneid*, VI, 548 ff.

NOTE 38. Cf. Milton's *Lycidas*, ll. 123, 124.

"And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw."

NOTE 39. An allusion to Horace's *Satires*, I, vii, 34, 35.

NOTE 40. An allusion to Terence's *Andrea*, V, ii, 16.

NOTE 41. An allusion to Terence's *Adelphi*, III, iii, 74.

NOTE 42. Force enough.

NOTE 43. Raging madness. From Catullus, *Attis*, 38(?).

NOTE 44. In *Biographia Literaria* and in *Table Talk*.

NOTE 45. For an amusing account of the origin of this

periodical, see Mozley's *Reminiscences of Oriel College*, vol. ii, *addenda*. A.

NOTE 46. The term *First Grecian* denominated two picked scholars who were sent up to Cambridge every year with the understanding that they should take orders.

NOTE 47. Dr. Trollope, who succeeded Boyer as headmaster. A.

NOTE 48. Thornton (Lamb's "Key"). A.

NOTE 49. The infant realm. Cf. Virgil's *Æneid*, I, 562.

NOTE 50. Bishop Jewel, of Salisbury (1522-1571) and Richard Hooker (c. 1533-1600).

NOTE 51. "Scott, died in Bedlam" (Lamb's "Key"). A.

NOTE 52. "Maunde, dismiss'd school" (Lamb's "Key"). A.

NOTE 53. Adapted from Matthew Prior's *Carmen Saeculare* for 1700 (stanza viii): —

"Janus, mighty deity,
Be kind, and as thy searching eye
Does our modern story trace,
Finding some of Stuart's race
Unhappy, pass their annals by." A.

NOTE 54. Pico, Count of Mirandola (1463-1494), was a talented philosopher and humanist of the Italian Renaissance; friend of Lorenzo de' Medici.

NOTE 55. Neo-Platonic philosophers of the third century.

NOTE 56. Charles Valentine Le Grice and a younger brother of the name of Samuel were Grecians, and prominent members of the school in Lamb's day. They were from Cornwall. Charles became a clergyman, and held a living in his native county. Samuel went into the army, and died in the West Indies. It was he who was staying in London in the autumn of 1796, and showed himself a true friend to the Lambs at the season of the mother's death. Lamb writes to Coleridge, "Sam Le Grice, who was then in town, was with me the three or four first days, and was as a brother to me; gave up every hour of his time to the very hurting of his health and spirits in constant attendance, and humouring my poor father; talked with him, read to him, played at cribbage with him." He was a "mad wag," according to Leigh Hunt, who tells some pleasant anecdotes of him, but must have been a good-hearted fellow. "Le Grice the elder was a wag," adds Hunt, "like his brother, but more staid. He went into the church as he ought to do, and married a rich widow. He published a translation, abridged, of the celebrated pastoral of Longus; and report at school made him the author of a little anonymous tract on the *Art of Poking the Fire*." A.

NOTE 57. This is Fuller's account of the wit combats between Ben Jonson and Shakespeare. A.

NOTE 58. Handsome Nireus, called the handsomest man among the Greeks before Troy. Cf. *Iliad*, II, 673.

NOTE 59. The latter of these was named Favell, also a Grecian in the school. These two, according to Leigh Hunt, when

at the university wrote to the Duke of York to ask for commissions in the army. "The Duke good-naturedly sent them." Favell was killed in the Peninsula. His epitaph will be found on a tablet in Great St. Andrew's Church, Cambridge: "Samuel, a Captain in the 61st Regiment, having been engaged in the expedition to Egypt, afterwards served in the principal actions in the Peninsula, and fell whilst heading his men to the charge in the Battle of Salamanca, July 21, 1812." We shall meet with him again, under a different initial, in the Essay on *Poor Relations*. A.

NOTE 60. Frederick William Franklin.

NOTE 61. Marmaduke Thompson.

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

(*London Magazine*, February, 1821.)

THERE is probably no evidence existing as to the original of Mrs. Battle. Several of Lamb's commentators have endeavoured to prove her identity with Mary Field, Lamb's grandmother, so long resident with the Plumer family; the sole fact common to them being that Lamb represents Mrs. Battle (in the essay on *Blakesmoor*) as having died at Blakesware, where also Mrs. Field ended her days. But any one who will read, after the present essay, Lamb's indisputably genuine and serious verses on Mrs. Field's death (*The Grandame*) will feel that to have transformed her into this "gentlewoman born," with the fine "last century countenance," would have been little short of a *mauvaise plaisanterie*, of which Lamb was not likely to have been guilty. A.

Mrs. Battle was probably, in real life, to a large extent Sarah Burney, the wife of Rear-Admiral James Burney, Lamb's friend, and the centre of the whist-playing set to which he belonged. *Lucas*.

Leigh Hunt, reprinting this essay in the *London Journal*, presented it as follows: "Here followeth, gentle reader, the immortal record of Mrs. Battle and her whist; a game which the author, as thou wilt see, wished that he could play forever; and accordingly, in the deathless pages of his wit, forever will he play it."

NOTE 1. Cf. Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, Canto iii.

NOTE 2. *Mr. Bowles*. — William Lisle Bowles brought out his edition of Pope in 1807. A.

NOTE 3. The ace of spades.

NOTE 4. In this game of ombre, played by four, one may, if he has a very good hand, play alone *sans prendre*, i. e., without choosing a partner. To make a *vole* is to take all the tricks. Therefore *sans prendre vole* means to take single-handed every trick.

NOTE 5. Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527), Italian statesman and author, whose name has become a synonym for

strategy and cunning. Lamb refers here to his *Istorie fiorentine* (Florentine history).

NOTE 6. Sir Anthony Vandyke (1599–1641), Flemish portrait painter who lived chiefly in England after 1632 and was court painter to Charles I.

NOTE 7. Paul Potter (1625–1654), Dutch animal painter.

NOTE 8. Pope's phrases in *The Rape of the Lock*. Pam is the knave of clubs.

NOTE 9. Cf. "For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen." Acts xix, 24.

NOTE 10. In *The South-Sea House*.

NOTE 11. *Bridget Elia*. — The name by which Lamb always indicates his sister in this series of essays. A. Cf. note 6, *Old China*.

NOTE 12. Won all the cards from her.

A CHAPTER ON EARS

(*London Magazine*, March, 1821.)

NOTE 1. Lamb's indifference to music is one of the best-known features of his personality. Compare the admirably humorous verses, "Free Thoughts on Several Eminent Composers," beginning —

"Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart,
Just as the whim bites; for my part
I do not care a farthing candle
For either of them, or for Handel, —
Cannot a man live free and easy
Without admiring Pergolesi?
Or through the world with comfort go
That never heard of Dr. Blow?" A.

"Lamb was not so utterly without ear as he states. Crabb Robinson in his diary records more than once that Lamb hummed tunes, and Barron Field, in the memoir of Lamb contributed by him to the *Annual Biography and Obituary* for 1836, mentions his love for certain beautiful airs, among them Kent's 'O that I had wings like a dove' (mentioned in this essay), and Handel's 'From mighty kings.' Lamb says that it was Braham who awakened a love of music in him." Lucas.

NOTE 2. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, V, i.

NOTE 3. Phrases in the songs in *Artaxerxes*, the first play which Lamb ever saw. Cf. the essay *My First Play*.

NOTE 4. See note 8, *Dream Children: A Reverie*.

NOTE 5. Doubtless Lamb's friend, William Ayrton, the well-known musical critic of that day (1777–1858). A.

NOTE 6. Baralippton is a term given in the *Memoria Technica* to the first mode of the first figure of the syllogism. Lucas.

NOTE 7. Jubal was, according to Genesis, a son of Lamech and the inventor of string and wind instruments. Cf. "And

his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." Genesis iv, 21.

NOTE 8. An allusion to Hogarth's picture of the musician driven mad by street noises.

NOTE 9. Cf. note 17, *The South-Sea House*.

NOTE 10. From a stanza in the original draft of Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*. The stanza was omitted in all editions of the poem after the first (1819).

NOTE 11. Cf. Revelation x, 10.

NOTE 12. Burton, Robert (1577-1640), the author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*.

NOTE 13. Delightful madness. Horace, *Odes*, III, 4.

NOTE 14. A most pleasing hallucination of the mind. Horace, *Epistles*, II, 2.

NOTE 15. Rustic bashfulness. Cicero, *Litterae ad Familiam*, V, 12.

NOTE 16. Vincent Novello, the well-known organist and composer, father of Mlle. Clara Novello and Mrs. Cowden Clarke (1781-1861). A.

NOTE 17. Inaccurately quoted from *The Compleat Angler*, Part I, Chap. iv.

NOTE 18. Cf. 1 Corinthians xv, 48.

NOTE 19. Arion was the Greek poet (c. 700 B. C.) who, according to the legend, was thrown overboard by the sailors when he was returning from a musical contest in Sicily in which he had been victor. But the dolphins and Tritons, charmed by his songs, bore him safely to land.

NOTE 20. Haydn, Joseph (1732-1809); Mozart, Wolfgang (1756-1791); Beethoven, Ludwig von (1770-1827): celebrated Austrian composers.

NOTE 21. Bach, Johann Sebastian (1685-1750), celebrated German composer of church music.

NOTE 22. The heretic's hammer, — the Latin title of a work by Johann Faber (1478-1541), an opponent of Luther.

NOTE 23. Marcion was a noted heretic of the second century, who revised the gospel of St. Luke and ten of Paul's epistles, and based his beliefs upon those as the only inspired Scripture.

NOTE 24. The Ebionites (second century) denied the divinity of Jesus and rejected all of St. Paul's writings.

NOTE 25. Cerinthus (end of first century) admitted Christianity, but tried to incorporate with it Jewish and Oriental tenets.

NOTE 26. Cf. Revelation xx, 8.

WITCHES AND OTHER NIGHT FEARS

(*London Magazine*, October, 1821.)

The student of Lamb should read with this essay the story of "The Witch Aunt" in *Mrs. Leicester's School*, which Lamb wrote in 1808.

NOTE 1. Witches were believed to make wax figures of their

victims, and while they tortured them the real persons faded and pined away.

NOTE 2. Cf. "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Matthew xxv, 33.

NOTE 3. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, 11-14.

NOTE 4. Cf. *The Tempest*, I, ii.

NOTE 5. In Spenser's *Faerie Queene* Sir Guyon is the good knight of Temperance. Cf. Book II, Canto xi, for this reference.

NOTE 6. Stackhouse, Thomas (1677-1752). His work was entitled *A New History of the Holy Bible from the Beginning of the World to the Establishment of Christianity* (1737). It was fully illustrated. Lamb says elsewhere that he never forgot the quaint cut of the elephant and the camel in the ark, and that the plate of the Witch of Endor was the bugbear of his childhood. Lucas's edition of *Essays of Elia* reprints this illustration on p. 353.

NOTE 7. Cf. 1 Samuel xxviii.

NOTE 8. In Book I of the *Faerie Queene* Spenser represents St. George, the patron saint of England, in the character of the Red Cross Knight, who slays the monster Error, as alluded to here. Cf. Book I, Canto i.

NOTE 9. From "The Author's Abstract of Melancholy," prefixed to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. A.

NOTE 10. Thornton Hunt, Leigh Hunt's eldest boy. This passage is interesting as having provoked Southey's violent attack on Leigh Hunt and his principles, in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1823. A.

In this article Southey attacked Leigh Hunt as an unbeliever who was not honest with himself, and who could not, after professing lack of faith in religion, rid himself entirely of the element of fear. As proof of this he cited this passage of Lamb's, and went on to criticise severely the lack of a religious training in Hunt's children. Lamb was sensitive about the matter, and wrote, "Southey has attacked *Elia* on the score of infidelity. . . . He might have spared an old friend such a construction of a few careless flights that meant no harm to religion." Later Lamb in an open letter defended himself and Hunt, and when he found Southey grieved in his turn, he apologized, and the friendship was resoldered.

NOTE 11. Cf. *Macbeth*, V, iii.

NOTE 12. The three sisters who turned to stone all those who looked upon them. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, II, 628.

NOTE 13. The Hydra, slain by Hercules, was the many-headed serpent of the marshes in Argolis.

NOTE 14. The Chimæra, slain by Bellerophon, was a fire-breathing monster of Lycia.

NOTE 15. Cf. note 7, *Grace Before Meat*.

NOTE 16. From Spenser's *Epithalamion*, ll. 343, 344. A.

NOTE 17. See Lamb's letter to Manning, in 1802, describing his and Mary's visit to Coleridge at Keswick. "We got in in the

evening, travelling in a post-chaise from Penrith, in the midst of a gorgeous sunset, which transmuted all the mountains into colours. We thought we had got into Fairyland. . . . Such an impression I never received from objects of sight before, nor do I suppose that I can ever again." A.

NOTE 18. Cf. Wordsworth's "the inward eye" in *The Daffodils*.

NOTE 19. A peak in the Lake District of England, near Ambleside.

NOTE 20. Cf. Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, l. 3.

NOTE 21. The pseudonym of Bryan Waller Proctor (1787-1874), poet and prose-writer. Lamb refers here to his poem, *A Dream*.

NOTE 22. The wife of one of the kings of Thebes, who threw herself into the sea to escape from her mad husband and was changed into a sea goddess. In his *Adventures of Ulysses* Lamb describes beautifully her rescue of Ulysses.

NOTE 23. In the borough of Lambeth, south of the Thames.

VALENTINE'S DAY

(*Leigh Hunt's Indicator*, February 14, 1821.)

NOTE 1. A Christian martyr of the reign of Claudius (third century). Probably the custom of sending love missives in that day did not originate from any association with St. Valentine, but from a Roman practice connected with the worship of Juno on this day.

NOTE 2. High priest of the god of marriage.

NOTE 3. Jerome (340-420); Ambrose (340-397): fathers of the Latin Church.

NOTE 4. Cyril (d. 444), commemorated as a saint in the Greek, Latin, and Anglican churches; he was one of the instigators of the tumult which ended in the death of Hypatia.

NOTE 5. Austin, i. e., Augustine, contended that unbaptized infants were lost; Origen, an early father of the Greek Church.

NOTE 6. Bull, Parker (Archbishop of Canterbury, 1559-1575), Whitgift (Archbishop of Canterbury, 1583-1604), were prelates who suggested themselves to Lamb because of their ecclesiastical tyranny.

NOTE 7. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, I, 768. A.

NOTE 8. Another of Lamb's adaptations of Shakespeare. The original is in *Twelfth Night*, Act II, Sc. iv. A little later on will be noticed a similar free-and-easy use of a passage from Wordsworth. A.

NOTE 9. Cf. *Macbeth*, I, v.

NOTE 10. Cf. "Which having been must ever be," Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, x, 15.

NOTE 11. Edward Francis Burney (1760-1848), a portrait painter, and book illustrator on a large scale. He was a cousin of Mde. D'Arblay, and not a half-brother as stated in Lamb's

"Key." His name may be seen "at the bottom of many a well-executed vignette in the way of his profession" in the periodicals of his day. He illustrated for Harrison, the *World*, *Tatler*, *Guardian*, *Adventurer*, etc., besides the *Arabian Nights*, and novels of Richardson and Smollett. A.

NOTE 12. The story of Pyramus and Thisbe (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IV, 55-166) can be found in any classical dictionary. Shakespeare's burlesque of the story may be found in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i.

NOTE 13. The story of Dido may be found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, XIV, 2, and in Virgil's *Æneid*, I-III.

NOTE 14. The story of Hero and Leander may be found in Ovid's *Heroides*, XVIII-XIX.

NOTE 15. The Cayster, or Little Meander, is a river in Lydia much celebrated by the ancient poets (Homer, Virgil, Ovid, etc.), who often allude to the swans which frequented it. Cf. *Iliad*, II, 461.

NOTE 16. Iris was the name of the many-colored rainbow. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, XI, 244.

NOTE 17. Cf. the song of the mad Ophelia:—

"To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I await at your window,
To be your Valentine."

Hamlet, IV, v.

MY RELATIONS

(*London Magazine*, June, 1821.)

In these two successive essays, and in that on the Benchers of the Inner Temple, Lamb draws portraits, of singular interest to us, of his father, aunt, brother, and sister—all his near relations, with one exception. The mother's name never occurs in letter or published writing after the first bitterness of the calamity of September, 1796, had passed away. This was doubtless out of consideration for the feelings of his sister. Very noticeable is the frankness with which he describes the less agreeable side of the character of his brother John, who was still living, and apparently on quite friendly terms with Charles and Mary. A.

NOTE 1. Sir Thomas (1605-1682), English physician, and author of *Religio Medici*, *Urn Burial*, *Christian Morals*, etc.

NOTE 2. A sister of John Lamb the elder, who generally lived with the family, and contributed something to the common income. After the death of the mother, a lady of comfortable means, a relative of the family, offered her a home, but the arrangement did not succeed, and the aunt returned to die among her own people. Charles writes, just before her death in February, 1797: "My poor old aunt, who was the kindest creature to me when I was at school, and used to bring me good things; when I, schoolboy-like, used to be ashamed to see her come,

and open her apron, and bring out her basin with some nice thing which she had saved for me, — the good old creature is now dying. She says, poor thing, she is glad she is to come home to die with me. I was always her favourite." See also the lines "written on the day of my aunt's funeral" in the little volume of *Blank Verse*, by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb, published in 1798. A. Cf. essay on *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*, Note 6.

NOTE 3. Thomas à Kempis (1380 (?)–1471), a German mystic, usually credited with the authorship of *De Imitatione Christi*.

NOTE 4. The centre of Unitarianism, with which Lamb allied himself for a while.

NOTE 5. In this and the next sentence is a curious blending of fact and fiction. Besides John and Mary, four other children had been born to John and Elizabeth Lamb in the Temple, between the years 1762 and 1775, but had apparently not survived their infancy. Two daughters had been christened Elizabeth, one in 1762 and another after her death, in 1768. John and Mary Lamb are now to be described as cousins, under the names of James and Bridget Elia. Charles Lamb actually had relations, in that degree, living in Hertfordshire, in the neighbourhood of Wheathampstead. A.

NOTE 6. Two sisters of Charles Lamb's were christened by that name, but both died in infancy.

NOTE 7. The mixture of the man of the world, dilettante, and sentimentalist — not an infrequent combination — is here described with graphic power. All that we know of John Lamb, the "broad, burly, jovial," living his bachelor life in chambers at the old Sea-House, is supported and confirmed by this passage. Touching his extreme sensibility to the physical sufferings of animals, there is a letter of Charles to Crabb Robinson of the year 1810, which is worth noting. "My brother, whom you have met at my rooms (a plump, good-looking man of seven-and-forty), has written a book about humanity, which I transmit to you herewith. Wilson, the publisher, has put it into his head that you can get it reviewed for him. I daresay it is not in the scope of your review; but if you could put it into any likely train, he would rejoice. For, alas! our boasted humanity partakes of vanity. As it is, he teases me to death with choosing to suppose that I could get it into all the Reviews, at a moment's notice. I!!! — who have been set up as a mark for them to throw at, and would willingly consign them all to Megæra's snaky locks. But here's the book, and don't show it to Mrs. Collier, for I remember she makes excellent eel soup, and the leading points of the book are directed against that very process." A.

NOTE 8. The pseudonym of Lawrence Sterne in *A Sentimental Journey*. Sterne borrowed the name from Shakespeare's jester in *Hamlet*, V, i.

NOTE 9. Shandian is an adjective of Lamb's own coining to describe Sterne's style in *Tristram Shandy*.

NOTE 10. Domenichino (1581-1641), an Italian painter, whose greatest work is the "Communion of St. Jerome," in the Vatican.

NOTE 11. Charles XII, king of Sweden from 1697 to 1718.

NOTE 12. The sovereign prince of Tartary. Smollett called Dr. Johnson the "Great Cham of Literature."

NOTE 13. Albemarle St., Piccadilly: John Murray (1778-1843), the second of four John Murrays, all of whom have been famous English publishers. John Murray, 2d, published the works of Byron, Moore, Campbell, Irving, etc.

NOTE 14. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, II, 164.

NOTE 15. Claude Lorrain (1600-1682), a celebrated French landscape painter.

NOTE 16. Hobbima (1638-1709), a famous Dutch landscape painter.

NOTE 17. James Christie, father and son, were famous antiquarians and auctioneers in Pall Mall. The younger Christie was also an art critic and author of reputation.

NOTE 18. Pall Mall is the street which leads from Trafalgar Square to the Green Park. Pronounced *Pell Mell*.

NOTE 19. Cf. Pope's *Epistle to Martha Blount*, 20.

NOTE 20. Raphael Sanzio (1483-1520), the celebrated Italian painter, among whose masterpieces are "The Marriage of the Virgin" (Milan), "St. George" (Louvre), the Stanze of the Vatican, "The Transfiguration" (Vatican).

NOTE 21. Agostino, Annibale, Lodovico Carracci, Italian painters of the Bolognese school.

NOTE 22. Luca Giordano (1632-1705), a Neapolitan artist, called "Fa-Presto" for the speed of his execution.

NOTE 23. Carlo Maratti (1625-1713), an Italian painter of no great merit; his paintings are largely Madonnas and religious subjects.

NOTE 24. Cf. Shakespeare's *Richard II*, V, i, 78-80.

NOTE 25. Cf. *The Faerie Queene*, I, III, i.

NOTE 26. Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846), a famous English abolitionist; the quotation, "true yoke-fellow with Time" is from Wordsworth's sonnet to Clarkson.

NOTE 27. Distrest Sailors. (Lamb's "Key").

NOTE 28. From an early sonnet of Lamb's. A.

In the *London Magazine* the essay ended with the words, "Till then, farewell." *Lucas*.

THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE

(*London Magazine*, September, 1821.)

Lucas's edition of *Essays of Elia* prints (p. 362) a woodcut of Lamb's birthplace, No. 2, Crown Office Row, and (p. 364) a map of the Temple.

NOTE 1. Charles Lamb was born on the 10th of February, 1775, in Crown Office Row, Temple, where Samuel Salt, a

Bencher of the Inn, owned two sets of chambers. This was Lamb's home for the seven years preceding his admission into Christ's Hospital in 1782, and afterwards, in the holiday seasons, till he left school in 1789, and later, at least till Salt's death in 1792. A recent editor of Lamb's works has stated that, with the exception of Salt, almost all the names of Benchers given in this essay are "purely imaginary." The reverse of this is the fact. All the names here celebrated are to be found in the records of the honorable society. A.

NOTE 2. Spenser's *Prothalamion*, stanza viii. A.

NOTE 3. Paper Buildings, facing King's Bench Walk in the Temple. The line is doubtless improvised for the occasion. A.

NOTE 4. Twickenham (once the residence of Pope, it will be remembered) was some twelve miles nearer to the source of the Thames than was London.

NOTE 5. The hall of the Middle Temple. The fountain still plays, but "quantum mutatus." A.

NOTE 6. Shakespeare's Sonnet, No. 104. A.

NOTE 7. *3 Henry VI*, II, v, 24. A.

NOTE 8. Andrew Marvell (1621-1678). At one time Milton's assistant in the Latin Secretaryship, and known principally in his own day for his satires against the Stuarts. This passage is quoted from verses entitled "The Garden," which may be found in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*.

NOTE 9. Lincoln's Inn is one of the London Inns of Court, so named from the Earl of Lincoln, whose town house originally covered the same site.

NOTE 10. Concerning the winged horse, the badge of the Inner Temple, Mrs. E. T. Cook, in her *Highways and Byways of London*, 1902, has this interesting passage: "This winged horse has a curious history; for, when the horse was originally chosen as an emblem, he had no wings, but was ridden by two men at once, to indicate the self-chosen poverty of the brotherhood; in lapse of years the figures of the men became worn and abraded, and when restored were mistaken for wings." *Lucas*.

NOTE 11. Jekyll, the Master in Chancery. The wit, and friend of wits, among the old Benchers — the Sir George Rose of his day. A.

NOTE 12. Nephew of William, fifth Earl of Coventry; of North Cray Place, Bexley, Kent; called to the Bench in 1766; died in 1797. A.

NOTE 13. Cf. 2 Kings ii.

NOTE 14. Called to the Bench, 1782; died in 1792. The Bencher in whom Lamb had the most peculiar interest. John Lamb, the father, was in the service of Salt for some five and forty years — he acting as clerk and confidential servant, and his wife as housekeeper. As we have seen, Mr. Salt occupied two sets of chambers in Crown Office Row, forming a substantial house. He had two indoor servants, besides John and Elizabeth Lamb, and kept his carriage. Salt died in 1792. By his

will, dated 1786, he gives "To my servant, John Lamb, who has lived with me near forty years, £500 South Sea stock; and to Mrs. Lamb £100 in money, well deserved for her care and attention during my illness." By a codicil, dated December 20, 1787, his executors are directed to employ John Lamb to receive the testator's "Exchequer annuities of £210 and £14 during their term, and to pay him £10 a-year for his trouble so long as he shall receive them," a delicate and ingenious way of retaining John Lamb in his service, as it were, after his own decease. By a later codicil, he gives another hundred pounds to Mrs. Lamb. These benefactions, and not the small pension erroneously stated, on the authority of Talfourd, in my memoir of Lamb, formed the provision made by Salt for his faithful pair of attendants. The appointment of Charles to the clerkship in the India House in 1792 must have been the last of the many kind acts of Samuel Salt to the family. Where the Lamb family moved to after Salt's death in 1792, and how they struggled on between that date and the fatal year 1796, is one of the unsettled points of Lamb's history. Mary Lamb's skill with her needle was probably used as a means of increasing the common income. Crabb Robinson tells us of an article on needlework contributed by her some years later to one of the magazines. A.

NOTE 15. See Note 22. Lamb mentions, in *Newspapers Five and Thirty Years Ago*, a Lovell whose name may have been the origin of this pseudonym for Lamb's father.

NOTE 16. The heroine of a *cause célèbre* in the year 1752. Her whole story will be found, *à propos* of the town of Henley, in Mr. Leslie's charming book on the Thames, entitled *Our River*. Miss Blandy, the daughter of an attorney at Henley, with good expectations from her father, attracted the attention of an adventurer, a certain Captain Cranstoun. The father disapproved of the intimacy, and the Captain entrusted Miss Blandy with a certain powder which she administered to her father with a fatal result. Her defence was that she believed the powder to be of the nature of a love-philtre, which would have the effect of making her father well-affected towards her lover. The defence was not successful, and Miss Blandy was found guilty of murder, and executed at Oxford in April, 1752. A.

NOTE 17. Susannah Pierson, sister of Salt's brother-Benchler, Peter Pierson, mentioned in this essay, and one of Salt's executors. By his second codicil, Salt bequeaths her, as a mark of regard, £500; his silver inkstand; and the "works of Pope, Swift, Shakespeare, Addison, and Steele;" also Sherlock's Sermons (Sherlock had been Master of the Temple), and any other books she likes to choose out of his library, hoping that, "by reading and reflection," they will "make her life more comfortable." How oddly touching this bequest seems to us, in the light thrown on it by Lamb's account of the relation between Salt and his friend's sister! What a pleasant glimpse,

again, is here afforded of the "spacious closet of good old English reading" into which Charles and Mary were "tumbled," as he told us, at an early age, when they "browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage." A.

NOTE 18. One of four parishes in Kent, known as The Crays.

NOTE 19. *Hic currus et arma fuere*: here were his chariots and his arms. Virgil's *Æneid*, I, 17.

NOTE 20. John Elwes (1714-1789) was a famous English miser. Although he spent his money freely in gaming, he made himself a notorious spectacle by his refusal to provide for his personal necessities. He was not, however, illiberal in contributing to the needs of others.

NOTE 21. Cf. Swift's *Voyage to Laputa*, where this servant is described as one whose business it was to strike gently "with his bladder the mouth of him who is to speak, and the right ear of him, or them, to whom the speaker addresseth himself."

NOTE 22. Lamb's father, John Lamb. The sketch of him given in Mr. Proctor's memoirs of Charles, taken doubtless from the portrait here mentioned, confirms the statement of a general resemblance to Garrick. A. A portrait of John Lamb is reproduced in Lucas's edition of *Essays of Elia*, p. 369.

NOTE 23. Cf. *King Lear*, V, iii.

NOTE 24. David Garrick (1717-1779), the celebrated English actor who, in his Drury Lane Theatre, did much to make known to his contemporaries the plays of Shakespeare: pupil and friend of Dr. Johnson, and member of the famous London Club.

NOTE 25. Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), author of *A Tale of a Tub*, *The Battle of the Books*, *Journal to Stella*, *Gulliver's Travels*.

NOTE 26. Matthew Prior (1664-1721), joined with Swift and Pope in the project of the Scriblerus Club. The most famous of his satires was *The City House and the Country House*, a parody of Dryden's *The Hind and the Panther*.

NOTE 27. Canon Ainger, in his *Life of Charles Lamb*, speaks of a medallion of Salt done by John Lamb in plaster of Paris.

NOTE 28. Izaak Walton (1593-1683), author of *The Compleat Angler*.

NOTE 29. One of Lamb's quotations from himself. It occurs in the lines (February, 1797) "written on the day of my aunt's funeral:" —

"One parent yet is left, — a wretched thing,
A sad survivor of his buried wife,
A palsy-smitten, childish, old, old man,
A semblance most forlorn of what he was,
A merry cheerful man."

John Lamb lingered till April, 1799. A.

NOTE 30. Bayes was the name of a character in Buckingham's farce, "The Rehearsal," — a coxcomb's part which Garrick especially delighted in.

NOTE 31. Called to the Bench 1800, died 1808. It will be seen that Salt and Pierson, though friends and contemporaries at the Bar, were not so as Benchers. Salt had been some years dead when his friend was called to the Bench. A. Lamb may be comparing his personal appearance to that of "our great philanthropist," John Howard.

NOTE 32. The antiquary, naturalist, and correspondent of White of Selbourne. Called to the Bench in 1777, died 1800. A.

NOTE 33. Called to the Bench 1775, died 1791. A.

NOTE 34. Called to the Bench 1792, died 1804. A.

NOTE 35. There never was a Benchers of the Inner Temple of this name. The gentleman here intended, Mr. Richard Twopenny, was a stockbroker, a member of the Kentish family of that name, who, being a bachelor, lived in chambers in the Temple. On his retirement from business he resided at West Mailing in Kent, and died in 1809, at the age of eighty-two. Mr. Edward Twopenny of Woodstock, Sittingbourne, a great-nephew of this gentleman, remembers him well, and informs me that he was, as Lamb describes him, remarkably thin. Lamb evidently recalled him as a familiar figure in the Temple in his own childish days, and supposed him to have been a member of the Bar. Mr. Twopenny held the important position of stockbroker to the Bank of England. A.

NOTE 36. Called to the Bench 1801, died in 1812. A.

NOTE 37. Called to the Bench 1770, died 1787. This gentleman was M. P. for New Romney and a member of Lord Shelburne's Government in 1782. From his wide reading and extraordinary memory he was known, beyond the circle of his brother-Benchers, as "the omniscient." Dr. Johnson (reversing the usual order of his translations) styles him the "all-knowing." See Boswell, under date of April, 1776: "No, Sir; Mr. Thrale is to go by my advice to Mr. Jackson (the all-knowing), and get from him a plan for seeing the most that can be seen in the time that we have to travel." A.

NOTE 38. Roger Bacon (1214-1294), author of the scientific work *Opus Magnus*. Greene has represented him in his play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* as a great wizard possessing all magic powers.

NOTE 39. Called to the Bench 1785, died 1812. Mr. Mingay was an eminent King's Counsel, and in his day a powerful rival at the Bar, of Thomas Erskine; according to an obituary notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, of "a persuasive oratory, infinite wit, and most excellent fancy." His retort upon Erskine, about the knee-buckles, goes to confirm this verdict. A.

NOTE 40. Michael Angelo's "Moses" is the colossal statue in San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome. The peculiar arrangement of the hair gives the effect of horns to the august head.

NOTE 41. Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer, a post which he filled for fifty years. He persevered to the end of his days in wearing the costume of the reign in which he was born. A.

NOTE 42. Cf. 1 Samuel xxviii, 13, 14.

NOTE 43. Lamb's use of the word Goshen was frequent; here it is peculiarly adapted to his meaning; Goshen was the small pastoral region in Lower Egypt occupied by the Israelites before the Exodus.

NOTE 44. Randal Norris, for many years Sub-Treasurer and Librarian of the Inner Temple. At the age of fourteen he was articled to Mr. Walls of Paper Buildings, and from that time, for more than half a century, resided in the Inner Temple. His wife was a native of Widford, the village adjoining Blakesware, in Hertfordshire, and a friend of Mrs. Field, the housekeeper, and there was thus a double tie connecting Randal Norris with Lamb's family. His name appears early in Charles's correspondence. At the season of his mother's death he tells Coleridge that Mr. Norris had been more than a father to him, and Mrs. Norris more than a mother. Mr. Norris died in the Temple in January, 1827, at the age of seventy-six, and was buried in the Temple churchyard. Talfourd misdates the event by a year. It was then that Charles Lamb wrote to Crabb Robinson, "In him I have a loss the world cannot make up. He was my friend and my father's friend all the life I can remember. I seem to have made foolish friendships ever since. Those are the friendships which outlive a second generation. Old as I am waxing, in his eyes I was still the child he first knew me. To the last he called me Charley. I have none to call me Charley now." A.

NOTE 45. Sylvanus Urban was the pseudonym of the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

NOTE 46. Cf. *King Lear*, II, iv.

NOTE 47. Richard Hooker (1553-1600), the celebrated divine, was appointed Master of the Temple in 1575.

NOTE 48. John Selden (1584-1654), a famous English jurist, antiquary, politician, and author, who lived in the Inner Temple.

GRACE BEFORE MEAT

NOTE 1. *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser's (1552-1599) great allegory.

NOTE 2. A glance at the Abbey of Theleme founded by Gargantua for persons of sweet reasonableness (see Rabelais, Book I, Chaps. lii-lvii). *Lucas*.

NOTE 3. Utopian is derived from *Utopia* (Nowhere) by Sir Thomas More, a description of an imaginary commonwealth. Rabelæian is derived from Rabelais (1495-1553), the famous French humorist. The satire in his works is what Lamb has in mind here. His Utopian Rabelæian Christians would be satirical about present customs and manners and champions of a new order of things.

NOTE 4. An unusual guest.

NOTE 5. Cf. Milton's *Comus*, ll. 175, 176.

NOTE 6. Cf. Deuteronomy xxxii, 15.

NOTE 7. Cf. Virgil's *Æneid*, Book III.

"Swiftly they cleave
The air, and leave their filthy tracks behind
On the half-eaten banquet. All but one, —
Celaeno. She, the gloomy prophetess,
On a high rock alighting, thus broke forth
In words.

Ye hold your course to Italy;
Your Italy ye shall find, with winds invoked,
And sail into her ports. But ere ye gird
Your city with its walls, by famine dire,
For this your outrage ye shall be compelled
To gnaw the very boards on which you eat."

Cranch's Translation, ll. 312-330.

NOTE 8. *Paradise Regained*, II, 340-347.

NOTE 9. A holiday, or feast day.

NOTE 10. Roman Emperor from 218-222; but he gave over the government into the hands of his mother, while he abandoned himself to debauchery and gluttony.

NOTE 11. *Paradise Regained*, II, 264-278.

NOTE 12. Coleridge.

NOTE 13. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784). For a description of his voracious appetite, cf. Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson*.

NOTE 14. Dagon was a deity worshipped by the Philistines, — half man and half fish. Cf. Judges xvi, 23, and 1 Samuel v.

NOTE 15. Chartreuse, in France, the site of the leading Carthusian monastery.

NOTE 16. An old proverb runs: "I think thou wast born at Hoggs-Norton, where piggs play upon the organs." Hog's Norton is on the borders of Oxfordshire and Warwickshire. One account of the origin of the legend is the organ-playing of a villager named Pigg. In Witt's *Recreation*, there is this epigram on pigs' devouring a bed of pennyroyal, commonly called organs: —

"A good wife once, a bed of organs set,
The pigs came in, and eat up every whit;
The goodman said, Wife, you your garden may
Hog's Norton call, here pigs on organs play."

Lucas.

NOTE 17. Lucian (c 120-200), a celebrated Greek satirist, from whose wit even religion did not escape. "Lucian has much in common with Swift, and more, perhaps, with Voltaire." Jebb, *Greek Literature*.

NOTE 18. Charles Valentine Le Grice, Lamb's schoolfellow at Christ's Hospital. See the essay on *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*.

NOTE 19. "There was no place (occasion) for those things then." Horace, *Ars Poetica*, l. 19.

NOTE 20. Leigh Hunt tells the story in his account of Christ's Hospital: "Our dress was of the coarsest and quaintest kind,

but was respected out of doors, and is so. It consisted of a blue drugged gown, or body, with ample skirts to it; a yellow vest underneath in winter time; small clothes of Russia duck; worsted yellow stockings; a leathern girdle; and a little black worsted cap, usually carried in the hand. I believe it was the ordinary dress of children in humble life during the reign of the Tudors. We used to flatter ourselves that it was taken from the monks; and there went a monstrous tradition, that at one period it consisted of blue velvet with silver buttons. It was said, also, that during the blissful era of the blue velvet we had roast mutton for supper; but that the small clothes not being then in existence, and the mutton suppers too luxurious, the eatables were given up for the ineffables." A.

NOTE 21. I shudder as I recall it. Virgil's *Æneid*, II, 204.

NOTE 22. The following beautiful passage from the *Recreations and Studies by a Country Clergyman of the Eighteenth Century* (John Murray, 1882) shows that others, besides Lamb, had thought the main thought of this essay. The writer is describing, in 1781, the drive from Huddersfield, along the banks of the Calder: "I never felt anything so fine: I shall remember it and thank God for it as long as I live. I am sorry I did not think to say grace after it. Are we to be grateful for nothing but beef and pudding? to thank God for life, and not for happiness?" A.

DREAM CHILDREN: A REVERIE

(*London Magazine*, January, 1822.)

The mood in which Lamb was prompted to this singularly affecting confidence was clearly due to a family bereavement, a month or two before the date of the essay. I may be allowed to repeat words of my own, used elsewhere, on this subject. "Lamb's elder brother John was then lately dead. A letter to Wordsworth, of March, 1822, mentions his death as even then recent, and speaks of a certain 'deadness to everything' which the writer dates from that event. The 'broad, burly, jovial' John Lamb (so Talfourd describes him) had lived his own easy prosperous life up to this time, not altogether avoiding social relations with his brother and sister, but evidently absorbed to the last in his own interests and pleasures. The death of this brother, wholly unsympathetic as he was with Charles, served to bring home to him his loneliness. He was left in the world with but one near relation, and that one too often removed from him for months at a time by the saddest of afflictions. No wonder if he became keenly aware of his solitude." The emotion discernible in this essay is absolutely genuine; the blending of fact with fiction in the details is curiously arbitrary. A.

NOTE 1. Cf. the essay on *Blakesmoor in Hampshire* for a description of the great house, correctly stated there to be, not in Norfolk, but in Hertfordshire.

NOTE 2. The original story of the *Children in the Wood* can be found in Percy's *Reliques*, III, ii.

NOTE 3. Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, for more than fifty years housekeeper at Blakesware, a dower-house of the Hertfordshire family of Plumers, a few miles from Ware. William Plumer, who represented his country for so many years in Parliament, was still living, and Lamb may have disguised the whereabouts of the "great house" out of consideration for him. Why he substituted Norfolk is only matter for conjecture. Perhaps there were actually scenes from the old legend of the Children in the Wood carved upon a chimney-piece at Blakesware; possibly there was some old story in the annals of the Plumer family touching the mysterious disappearance of two children, for which it pleased Lamb to substitute the story of the familiar ballad. His grandmother, as he has told us in his lines *The Grandame*, was deeply versed "in anecdote domestic." A.

NOTE 4. The dismantling of the Blakesware House had therefore begun, it appears, before the death of William Plumer. Cussans, in his *History of Hertfordshire*, says it was pulled down in 1822. Perhaps the complete demolition was not carried out till after Mr. Plumer's death in that year. The "other house" was Gilston, the principal seat of the Plumers, some miles distant. A.

NOTE 5. Mrs. Field died in the summer of 1792, and was buried in the adjoining churchyard of Widford. Her gravestone, with the name and date of death, August 5, 1792, is still to be seen, and is one of the few tangible memorials of Lamb's family history still existing. By a curious fatality, it narrowly escaped destruction in the great gale of October, 1881, when a tree was blown down across it, considerably reducing its proportions. A.

NOTE 6. "I could tell of an old marble hall, with Hogarth's prints, and the Roman Cæsars in marble hung around." Lamb's letter to Southey (*Letters*, XLV). Cf. also the essay on *Blakesmoor in H—shire*.

NOTE 7. *John L.* — Of course John Lamb, the brother. Whether Charles was ever a "lame-footed" boy, through some temporary cause, we cannot say. We know that at the time of the mother's death John Lamb was suffering from an injury to his foot, and made it (after his custom) an excuse for not exerting himself unduly. See the letter of Charles to Coleridge written at the time. "My brother, little disposed (I speak not without tenderness for him) at any time to take care of old age and infirmities, had now, with his bad leg, an exemption from such duties." A.

NOTE 8. *I courted the fair Alice W—n.* — In my memoir of Charles Lamb, I have given the reasons for identifying Alice W—n with the Anna of the early sonnets, and again with the form and features of the village maiden described as Rosamund Gray. The girl who is celebrated under these various names won the heart of Charles Lamb while he was yet little more than a boy. He does not care to conceal from us that it was in Hertfordshire, while under his grandmother's roof, that he first

met her. The Beauty "with the yellow Hertfordshire hair — so like my Alice," is how he describes the portrait in the picture gallery at Blakesmoor. Moreover, the "winding woodwalks green," where he roamed with his Anna, can hardly be unconnected with the "walks and windings of Blakesmoor," apostrophised at the close of that beautiful essay. And there is a group of cottages called Blenheim, not more than half a mile from the site of Blakesware House, where the original Anna, according to the traditions of the village, resided. "Alice W——n" is one of Lamb's deliberate inventions. In the key to the initials employed by him in his essays, he explains that Alice W——n stood for Alice Winterton, but that the name was "feigned." Anna was, in fact, the nearest clue to the real name that Lamb has vouchsafed. Her actual name was, I have the best reason to believe, Ann Simmons. She afterwards married Mr. Bartram, the pawnbroker of Princes Street, Leicester Square. The complete history of this episode in Lamb's life will probably never come to light. There are many obvious reasons why any idea of marriage should have been indefinitely abandoned. The poverty in Lamb's home is one such reason; and one, even more decisive, may have been the discovery of the taint of madness that was inherited, in more or less degree, by all the children. Why Lamb chose the particular *alias* of Winterton, under which to disguise his early love, will never be known. It was a name not unfamiliar to him, being that of the old steward in Colman's play of the *Iron Chest*, a part created by Lamb's favourite comedian Dodd. The play was first acted in 1796, about the time when the final separation of the lovers seems to have taken place.

In illustration of Lamb's fondness for children, I have the pleasure of adding the following pretty letter to a child, not hitherto printed. It was written to a little girl (one of twin-sisters), the daughter of Kenney the dramatist, after Lamb and his sister's visit to the Kenneys at Versailles in September, 1822. The letter has been most kindly placed at my disposal by my friend Mr. W. J. Jeaffreson, whose mother was the Sophy of the letter. At the close of a short note to Mrs. Kenney, Lamb adds: "Pray deliver what follows to my dear wife, Sophy: —

"My dear Sophy, — The few short days of connubial felicity which I passed with you among the pears and apricots of Versailles were some of the happiest of my life. But they are flown!

"And your other half, your dear co-twin — that she-you — that almost equal sharer of my affections — you and she are my better half, a quarter apiece. She and you are my pretty sixpence, you the head, and she the tail. Sure, Heaven that made you so alike must pardon the error of an inconsiderate moment, should I for love of you, love her too well. Do you think laws were made for lovers? I think not.

"Adieu, amiable pair.

"Yours, and yours,

"C. LAMB.

"P. S. — I inclose half a dear kiss apiece for you." A.

NOTE 9. The river of oblivion whose waters brought to those who drank them forgetfulness of his previous existence. Lamb probably has in mind a passage in Virgil's *Æneid*, VI, 748-751.

DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS

(*London Magazine*, March, 1822.)

NOTE 1. *B. F.* — Barron Field. Born October 23, 1786. He was educated for the Bar and practised for some years, going the Oxford Circuit. In 1816 he married, and went out to New South Wales as Judge of the Supreme Court at Sydney. In 1824 he returned to England, having resigned his judgeship; but two or three years afterwards he was appointed Chief-Justice of Gibraltar. He died at Torquay in 1846. His brother, Francis John Field, was a fellow clerk of Charles Lamb's at the India House, which was perhaps the origin of the acquaintance. Barron Field edited a volume of papers (*Geographical Memoirs*) on New South Wales for Murray, and the appendix contains some short poems, entitled *First-Fruits of Australian Poetry*. Some papers of his are to be found in Leigh Hunt's *Reflector*, to which Lamb also contributed. A.

NOTE 2. *One of Mrs. Rowe's superscriptions.* — Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe (1674-1737), an exemplary person, and now forgotten moralist in verse and prose. Among other works she wrote, *Friendship in Death* — in *Twenty Letters from the Dead to the Living*. The following are from the "superscriptions" of these letters: "To Sylvia from Alexis;" "From Cleander to his Brother, endeavouring to reclaim him from his extravagances;" "To Emilia from Delia, giving her a description of the invisible regions, and the happy state of the inhabitants of Paradise." A.

NOTE 3.

"Let a Post-Angel start with thee,
And then the goal of earth shall reach as soon as he."
Cowley, *Hymn to Night*.

NOTE 4. Here we see some of the curious lore in Lamb's mind. He probably had his knowledge of Plato's man from Milton's Latin poem, "On the Platonic idea as it was understood by Aristotle," which may be read in Cowper's translation. The italicized words following explains Lamb's allusion to the man in the moon: —

"Whether, companion of the stars, he spend
Eternal ages, roaming at his will
From sphere to sphere the tenfold heav'ns; or dwell
On the moon's side that nearest neighbours earth."

Lucas,

who acknowledges the assistance here of Messrs. Hallward and Hill.

NOTE 5. See Lamb's essay *On the Acting of Munden*.

NOTE 6. *The late Lord C.* — The second Lord Camelford, killed in a duel with Mr. Best in 1804. The day before his death

he gave directions that his body should be removed "as soon as may be convenient to a country far distant! to a spot not near the haunts of men, but where the surrounding scenery may smile upon my remains. It is situated on the borders of the lake of St. Lampierre, in the Canton of Berne, and three trees stand in the particular spot." The centre tree he desired might be taken up and his body being there deposited immediately replaced. At the foot of this tree, his lordship added, he had formerly passed many solitary hours, contemplating the mutability of human affairs. — *Annual Register* for 1804. A.

NOTE 7. The patron saint of those in danger at sea.

NOTE 8. Lamb refers directly to Juvenal, *Satires*, XIV, 34:—

"Juvenes, quibus arte benigna
Et mellore luto finxit praeordia Titan."

(Youths whose breast the Titan moulded with genial art and of a finer clay.)

Juvenal probably refers to the belief expressed by Shakespeare in lines in *Antony and Cleopatra* which Lamb seems to have had in mind. First,

"The fire
That quickens Nilus' slime." I, iii.

and then, "Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun." II, vii. *Lucas*.

NOTE 9. As described in *The Adventures of Peter Wilkins* by Robert Paltock, 1751.

NOTE 10. The Greek Cynic philosopher (c. 412–323 B. C.) whose eccentricities — living in a tub, searching with his lantern for an honest man, ordering Alexander to step out of his sunlight — are preserved in tradition.

NOTE 11. Enable the descendant of an illegitimate child, in the third generation, to resume the family coat of arms.

NOTE 12. To the seat of the oracle of Pythian Apollo at Delphos, at the foot of Mt. Parnassus.

NOTE 13. So called from Nicholas Hare, Master of the Rolls in the reign of Mary I. Lamb from his home at 4 Inner Temple Lane, near by, wrote, "The rooms are delicious, and Hare's Court trees come in at the window so that it's like living in a garden."

NOTE 14. *Lycidas*, quoted incorrectly, as usual. A.

NOTE 15. Miss Winter.

NOTE 16. James White, Lamb's schoolfellow at Christ's Hospital. Died in 1820. A.

THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

(*London Magazine*, May, 1822.)

NOTE 1. The jaws of Hell. Virgil's *Aeneid*, VI, 201.

NOTE 2. Cf. *Macbeth*, IV, i.

NOTE 3. Saloop was an aromatic drink prepared from sassa-

fras bark and other ingredients, very popular in London in Lamb's day. Mr. Read's shop was at No. 102, Fleet Street.

NOTE 4. Cf. Note 17, *The South-Sea House*. Lucas's edition of *Essays of Elia* reproduces a detail of this picture of Hogarth's on p. 382.

NOTE 5. Milton's *Comus*, l. 223.

NOTE 6. Cf. "Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not." Jeremiah xxxi, 15.

NOTE 7. Edward Wortley Montagu (1713-1776), the traveler, ran away from Westminster School more than once, becoming, among other things, a chimney-sweeper.

NOTE 8. The seat of the Dukes of Norfolk in Sussex.

NOTE 9. Cf. Virgil's *Æneid*, I, 643-722.

NOTE 10. Cradle clothes.

NOTE 11. *My pleasant friend Jem White*. — James White, a schoolfellow of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital, and the author of a Shakespearian squib, suggested by the Ireland Forgeries — "Original Letters, etc., of Sir John Falstaff and his friends, now first made public by a gentleman, a descendant of Dame Quickly, from genuine manuscripts which have been in the possession of the Quickly family near four hundred years." It was published in 1795, and Southey believed that Lamb had in some way a hand in it. The Preface in particular bears some traces of his peculiar vein, but Lamb's enthusiastic recommendation of the book to his friends seems to show that it was in the main the production of James White. The *jeu d'esprit* is not more successful than such parodies usually are. White took to journalism, in some form, and was at the time of his death in March, 1820, an "agent of Provincial newspapers." His annual supper to the little climbing-boys was imitated by many charitable persons in London and other large towns. A.

NOTE 12. This was held in London from 1133 until 1855.

NOTE 13. Lamb's old friend and editor, John Fenwick, of the *Albion*. See Essay on the *Two Races of Men*. A.

NOTE 14. The second Earl of Rochester, John Wilmot, the companion of the excesses of Charles II.

NOTE 15. Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I, 541, 542.

NOTE 16. Cf. *Cymbeline*, IV, ii.

NOTE 17. It is curious that in this essay Lamb does not even allude to the grave subject of the cruelties incident to the climbing-boys' occupation — a question which for some years past had attracted the attention of philanthropic persons, in and out of Parliament. A year or two later, however, he made a characteristic offering to the cause. In 1824 James Montgomery of Sheffield edited a volume of prose and verse — *The Chimney-Sweeper's Friend, and the Climbing-Boy's Album*, to which many writers of the day contributed. Lamb, who had been applied to, sent Blake's poem, — *The Chimney-Sweeper*. It was headed, "Communicated by Mr. Charles Lamb,

from a very rare and curious little work" — doubtless a true description of the *Songs of Innocence* in 1824. It is noteworthy that, before sending it, this incorrigible joker could not refrain from quietly altering Blake's "Little Tom Dacre" into "Little Tom Toddy." A.

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

(*London Magazine*, September, 1822.)

The tradition as to the origin of cooking, which is of course the salient feature of this essay, had been communicated to Lamb, he here tells us, by his friend M., — Thomas Manning, — whose acquaintance he had made long ago at Cambridge, and who since those days had spent much of his life in exploring China and Thibet. Lamb says the same thing in one of his private letters, so we may accept it as a literal fact. The question therefore arises whether Manning had found the legend existing in any form in China, or whether Lamb's detail of the Chinese manuscript is wholly fantastic. It is at least certain that the story is a very old one, and appears as early as the third century, in the writings of Porphyry of Tyre. The following passage, a literal translation from the Treatise *De Abstinentiâ* of that philosopher, sets forth one form of the legend: —

"Asclepiades, in his work on Cyprus and Phœnice, writes as follows: 'Originally it was not usual for anything having life to be sacrificed to the gods — not that there was any law on the subject, for it was supposed to be forbidden by the law of nature. At a certain period, however (tradition says), when blood was required in atonement for blood, the first victim was sacrificed, and was entirely consumed by fire. On one occasion, in later times, when a sacrifice of this kind was being offered, and the victim in process of being burned, a morsel of its flesh fell to the ground. The priest, who was standing by, immediately picked it up, and on removing his fingers from the burnt flesh, chanced to put them to his mouth, in order to assuage the pain of the burn. As soon as he had tasted the burnt flesh he conceived a strange longing to eat of it, and accordingly began to eat the flesh himself, and gave some to his wife also. Pygmalion, on hearing of it, directed that the man and his wife should be put to death, by being hurled headlong from a rock, and appointed another man to the priest's office. When, moreover, not long after this man was offering the same sacrifice, and in the same way ate of the flesh, he was sentenced to the same punishment. When, however, the thing made further progress, and men continued to offer sacrifice, and in order to gratify their appetite could not refrain from the flesh, but regularly adopted the habit of eating it, all punishment for so doing ceased to be inflicted.'"

Manning may have been aware of this passage, and have told

the story in his own language to Charles Lamb. It is worth noticing that in 1823, the year following the appearance of this essay, Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, published a translation of certain Treatises of Porphyry, including the *De Abstergentiâ*. It is possible that Manning may, on some occasion, have learned the tradition from Taylor.

Recent editors of Lamb have asserted, without offering any sufficient evidence, that he owed the idea of this rhapsody on the Pig to an Italian poem, by Tigrinio Bistonio, published in 1761, at Modena, entitled *Gli Elogi del Proco* (Tigrinio Bistonio was the pseudonym of the Abate Giuseppe Ferrari). Mr. Richard Garnett of the British Museum, to whom I am indebted for calling my attention to the passage in Porphyry, has kindly examined for me the Italian poem in question, and assures me that he can find in it no resemblance whatever to Lamb's treatment of the same theme. There is no affectation in Lamb's avowal of his fondness for this delicacy. Towards the close of his life, however, Roast Pig declined somewhat in his favour, and was superseded by hare, and other varieties of game. Indeed, Lamb was as fond of game as Cowper was of fish; and as in Cowper's case, his later letters constantly open with acknowledgments of some recent offering of the kind from a good-natured correspondent. A.

NOTE 1. Thomas Manning, a life-long friend of Lamb's, with whom he kept up a correspondence, which contains some of the best of Lamb's wit and humour.

NOTE 2. Confucius (c. 550-478 B. C.), the Chinese philosopher.

NOTE 3. Locke, John (1632-1704), the English philosopher, author of the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*.

NOTE 4. World of eatables.

NOTE 5. The prince of viands.

NOTE 6. The love of uncleanness.

NOTE 7. From Coleridge's *Epitaph on an Infant*. It must have been with unusual glee that Lamb here borrowed half of his friend's quatrain. The epitaph had appeared in the very earliest volume to which he was himself a contributor — the little volume of Coleridge's poems, published in 1796, by Joseph Cottle, of Bristol. The lines are there allotted a whole page to themselves. A.

NOTE 8. A phrase from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, l. 1695. Lucas.

NOTE 9. "I gave you all." *King Lear*, II, iv.

NOTE 10. The reader will not fail to note the audacious indifference to fact that makes Lamb assert in a parenthesis that his school was on the other side of London Bridge, and that he was afterwards "at St. Omer's." A.

NOTE 11. St. Omer, France, formerly held a Roman Catholic college for English students. Lamb is simply assuming that he attended it.

NOTE 12. By a tremendous thrashing.

THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA

The Second Series of Elia was published in a collected form by Mr. Moxon in 1833. It was furnished with a Preface, purporting to be written by "a friend of the late Elia," announcing his death, and commenting freely on his character and habits. This Preface (written, of course, by Lamb himself) is placed in the present edition at the beginning of the volume. Elia is here supposed to have died in the interval between the publication of the First and Second Series. From the opening sentences we should conclude that it was at first intended as a postscript to the First Series, and indeed it originally appeared in the *London Magazine* for January, 1823. But this design, if ever entertained, was not carried out. A.

BLAKESMOOR IN H—SHIRE

(*London Magazine*, September, 1824.)

NOTE 1. Blakesmoor, as has been already observed, was Blakesware, a dower-house of the Plumers, about five miles from Ware, in Hertfordshire. If there were ever any doubt on the subject, Lamb's own words are decisive. In a letter to Bernard Barton, of August 10, 1827, occurs the following charming passage: "You have well described your old-fashioned paternal hall. Is it not odd that every one's recollections are of some such place? I had my Blakesware ('Blakesmoor' in the *London*). Nothing fills a child's mind like a large old mansion, better if un- or partially-occupied: peopled with the spirits of deceased members of the county and justices of the Quorum. Would I were buried in the peopled solitudes of one with my feelings at seven years old! Those marble busts of the emperors, they seemed as if they were to stand forever, as they had stood from the living days of Rome, in that old marble hall, and I to partake of their permanency. Eternity was, while I thought not of time. But he thought of me, and they are toppled down, and corn covers the spot of the noble old dwelling and its princely gardens. I feel like a grasshopper that, chirping about the grounds, escaped the scythe only by my littleness." A.

NOTE 2. Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), English poet.

NOTE 3. Ovid (43 B. C.-18 A. D.), a leading Roman poet of the Augustan Age, whose stories in *Metamorphoses* are here alluded to.

NOTE 4. Actæon, a hunter, beheld Diana bathing, who changed him into a stag, as punishment, and gave him over to her dogs. Lamb refers here to his sprouting horns. Cf. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book III.

NOTE 5. Marsyas, a mortal, once came upon the flute of Athene, and finding that he could draw forth celestial music he challenged Apollo to a musical contest. The Muses voted

the music of Marsyas the better, and in revenge Apollo flayed him alive. Cf. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book VI.

NOTE 6. Marvell, on Appleton House, to the Late Fairfax. A.

NOTE 7. This family traces its descent back to William de Mowbray (d. 1222?), one of the executors of Magna Charta. The name is perpetuated in Shakespeare's *Richard II*.

NOTE 8. The first Clifford on record is Walter de Clifford (d. 1190?), whose sons' names figure in the Domesday Book. Jane Clifford is the "Fair Rosamond" alluded to in the essay on *The South-Sea House*; cf. there, note 14.

NOTE 9. The Latin motto, meaning "I shall rise again."

NOTE 10. Damœtas and Ægon are shepherds in Virgil's third *Eclogue*.

NOTE 11. Lamb disguises the family of Plumer under this change of initial. He certainly did not mean the Wards — Mr. Ward not having become connected with the family of Plumer till several years later than the date of this essay. A.

NOTE 12. See note 21, *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*.

NOTE 13. See note 8, *Dream Children: A Reverie*.

NOTE 14. See note 6, *Dream Children: A Reverie*.

NOTE 15. The god of the pastures, flocks, and streams.

NOTE 16. The god of the forest.

NOTE 17. *Non omnis moriar*, Horace's *Odes*, III, 30, 36.

POOR RELATIONS

(*London Magazine*, May, 1823.)

NOTE 1. Agathocles was the son of a humble potter, but he rose to the generalship of the army and finally became ruler of all Sicily.

NOTE 2. Cf. Esther iv, 1-3; Luke xvi, 20; 1 Kings xiii, 24; Exodus viii, 3, 6; Ecclesiastes x, 1; Matthew vii, 3; Luke x, 42; Proverbs xxvi, 1 (?).

NOTE 3. Sometimes he had to be restrained.

NOTE 4. See Vanbrugh's comedy, *The Confederacy*. A.

NOTE 5. The Favell of the essay, *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*. Lamb, in his "Key" to the initials used by him, has written against the initial F., there employed: "Favell left Cambridge, because he was ashamed of his father, who was a house-painter there." He was a Grecian in the school in Lamb's time, and when at Cambridge wrote to the Duke of York for a commission in the army, which was sent him. Lamb here changes both his friend's name and his University. A.

NOTE 6. Nessus was a centaur slain by Hercules. He told the wife of Hercules, Dejanira, that if she would steep her husband's shirt in his blood, it would preserve Hercules's love for her. Hercules was, however, poisoned to death by the shirt.

NOTE 7. Hugh Latimer (1485-1555), the famous prelate. As a boy he attended Cambridge, where he wore the servitor's gown.

NOTE 8. Richard Hooker (1553-1600), the celebrated theologian, a graduate of Oxford.

NOTE 9. St. Luke, according to tradition, was a painter as well as a physician.

NOTE 10. See the concluding lines of *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, of which this is a more than usually free adaptation. In the incident referred to, the angel Gabriel and Satan are on the point of engaging in struggle, when

"The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heaven his golden scales."

Satan's attention being called to the sight,

"— The fiend looked up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft; nor more: but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night." A.

NOTE 11. San Sebastian (Spain) was besieged by Wellington in 1813, and finally taken.

NOTE 12. Hugo Grotius (de Groot) (1583-1645) was a famous Dutch jurist, and is commonly credited with being the founder of the science of international law.

STAGE ILLUSIONS

(*London Magazine*, August, 1831.)

NOTE 1. John Bannister (1760-1836), a celebrated English comedian.

NOTE 2. Gattie, Henry (1774-1844), singer and actor. As a rule he played the parts of old men, notably of Frenchmen and Irishmen.

NOTE 3. Emery, John (1777-1822), a famous actor of his day; the original of the part of Tyke in Morton's *School of Reform*, 1805.

NOTE 4. The flippant young courtier in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

NOTE 5. French, Benjamin (1778-1843), a well-known actor; the first Sir John Freeman in *Free and Easy*.

SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS

(*New Monthly Magazine*, May, 1826.)

Canon Ainger says of this essay, "No detached sentence can convey an idea of this splendid argument. Nothing that Lamb has written proves more decisively how large a part the higher imagination plays in true criticism." The essay was first published as a sequel to *Popular Fallacies*.

NOTE 1. From Cowley's fine lines — a true "In Memoriam"
— *On the Death of Mr. William Hervey*. A.

NOTE 2. Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book I, 296, 543.

NOTE 3. Cf. Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Act III, for the description of the king's madness.

NOTE 4. Timon, in Shakespeare's tragedy *Timon of Athens*, is the typical misanthrope.

NOTE 5. The faithful follower of Lear's misfortunes, acting as his adviser and guardian.

NOTE 6. The honest servant of Timon.

NOTE 7. The son of Oceanus and Tethys, who had the power to change his form at will.

NOTE 8. The repulsive monster, half man, half beast, whom Shakespeare in *The Tempest* makes the slave of Prospero.

NOTE 9. The witches in *Macbeth*.

NOTE 10. Wither, George (1588-1667), an English poet.

NOTE 11. Better known as the novels of the Minerva Press, from which Lane the publisher issued innumerable works. A.

NOTE 12. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, V, iii.

NOTE 13. Cf. *Macbeth*, II, i.

NOTE 14. For it the whole of the story alluded to, see Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Book II, Canto vii, the legend of Sir Guyon.

NOTE 15. Vulcan.

NOTE 16. The golden apples of Hesperides, to procure which was one of the labors of Hercules.

NOTE 17. Tantalus betrayed the secrets of the gods, and for this he was condemned to stand in Hades in deep water under a laden fruit tree, and to find that both retreated from him when he tried to appease his hunger or thirst.

NOTE 18. Cf. "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." Matthew xxvii, 24.

NOTE 19. The one-eyed giants of Greek mythology who assisted Vulcan at his forge.

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

(*London Magazine*, May, 1825.)

An account, substantially true to facts, of Lamb's retirement from the India House. This event occurred on the last Tuesday of March, 1825, and Lamb, after his custom, proceeded to make it a subject for his next essay of *Elia*. He here transforms the directors of the India House into a private firm of merchants. The names Boldero, Merryweather, and the others, were not those of directors of the company at the time of Lamb's retirement. Lamb retired on a pension of £450, being two-thirds of his salary at that date. Nine pounds a year were deducted to assure a pension to Mary Lamb in the event of her surviving her brother. "Here am I," writes Charles to Wordsworth shortly afterwards, "after thirty-three years' slavery, sitting in my own room at eleven o'clock, this finest of all April mornings, a freed man, with £441 a year for the

remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who out-lived his annuity and starved at ninety." A.

NOTE 1. Cf. Virgil's *Eclogues*, I.

NOTE 2. O'Keefe, John (1747-1833), an Irish dramatist.

NOTE 3. The Lacy mentioned later.

NOTE 4. The Bosanquet mentioned later.

NOTE 5. The fictitious names which Lamb gives to the directors of the India House.

NOTE 6. The last words of the Venetian historian, Paolo Sarpi (1552-1623).

NOTE 7. The state prison in Paris so notorious during the days of the French Revolution.

NOTE 8. Inaccurately quoted from Middleton's *Mayor of Queenboro'*, Act I, Sc. i. It should be "in a rough desert." A.

NOTE 9. The lines are from *The Vestal Virgin, or the Roman Ladies*, Act V, Sc. i. Sir Robert Howard (1626-1698) was Dryden's brother-in-law, and joint author with him of the *Indian Queen*. A.

NOTE 10. Of Lamb's fellow clerks in the India House, referred to here by their initials, Ch—— was a Mr. Chambers, Pl—— was W. D. Plumley, the son of a silversmith in Cornhill, and Do—— a Mr. Henry Dodwell, evidently one of Lamb's most intimate friends in the office. Their names occur in an unpublished letter of Lamb's to Mr. Dodwell, now lying before me. It is addressed "H. Dodwell, Esq., India House, London. (In his absence may be opened by Mr. Chambers.)" The letter is so characteristic that I may be allowed to quote some passages. It is written from Calne in Wiltshire, where Lamb was spending his summer holiday, in July, 1816:—

"My dear Fellow — I have been in a lethargy this long while and forgotten London, Westminster, Marlybone, Paddington; they all went clean out of my head, till happening to go to a neighbour's in this good borough of Calne, for want of whist players we fell upon *Commerce*. The word awoke me to a remembrance of my professional avocations and the long-continued strife which I have been these twenty-four years endeavouring to compose between those grand Irreconcilables — Cash and Commerce. I instantly called for an almanack, which with some difficulty was procured at a fortune-teller's in the vicinity (for the happy holiday people here having nothing to do keep no account of time), and found that by dint of duty I must attend in Leadenhall on Wednesday morning next, and shall attend accordingly. . . . Adieu! Ye fields, ye shepherds and herdesses, and dairies and cream-pots, and fairies, and dances upon the green. I come! I come! Don't drag me so hard by the hair of my head, Genius of British India! I know my hour is come — Faustus must give up his soul, O Lucifer, O Mephistopheles! Can you make out what all this letter is about? I am afraid to look it over, CH. LAMB.

"Calne, Wilts. Friday, July something, Old Style, 1816. No

new style here — all the styles are old, and some of the gates too for that matter." A.

NOTE 11. Sir Thomas Gresham (d. 1579) founded the Royal Exchange, and other members of this distinguished family were Lord Mayors of London.

NOTE 12. The Dick Whittington whose story was the subject of many old ballads and nursery tales.

NOTE 13. Aquinas, St. Thomas (c. 1225–1274), an Italian philosopher.

NOTE 14. The order of Carthusian monks was founded in 1086 by St. Bruno and established at Chartreuse.

NOTE 15. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, II, vi.

NOTE 16. The famous collection of Greek sculptures brought from Athens to England by Lord Elgin about 1800 and placed in the British Museum.

NOTE 17. Probably a reference to Lamb's Wednesday evening gatherings, which were in his day almost as famous as those at the Holland House. Some of Lamb's regular guests were Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Barry Cornwall, Charles Kemble, Lloyd, Field, and occasionally Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Coleridge.

NOTE 18. The seat of the royal residence, Windsor Castle, founded by William the Conqueror and restored by Queen Victoria, who especially enjoyed residence there.

NOTE 19. A reference to the beginning of Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, Book II, . . . which Munro translates: "It is sweet, when on the great sea the winds trouble its waters, to behold from land another's deep distress." *Lucas*.

NOTE 20. From the dramatic fragment, concerning Priam's slaughter, declaimed by the player in *Hamlet*, II, ii. A.

NOTE 21. Cf. Milton's *Il Penseroso*, ll. 49, 50.

NOTE 22. A fragment of Cicero's phrase, *otium cum dignitate*, leisure with dignity.

NOTE 23. The phrase means "the work is accomplished," and is possibly used here by Lamb for the sake of the pun.

OLD CHINA

(*London Magazine*, March, 1823.)

NOTE 1. This beautiful essay tells its own story — this time, we may be sure, without romance or exaggeration of any kind. It is a contribution of singular interest to our understanding of the happier days of Charles and Mary's united life. A.

NOTE 2. A Chinese governor.

NOTE 3. The hays was an old English dance, involving some intricate figures. It seems to have been known in England up to fifty years ago. The dance is often referred to in the writers whom Lamb most loved. Herrick, for example, has: —

"On holy-dayes, when Virgins meet
To dance the Heyes, with nimble feet." A.

NOTE 4. The name for China which the poets have especially loved.

NOTE 5. A fragrant green tea, from the Chinese word *hi-tshun*, the first crop.

NOTE 6. Beautiful wonders.

NOTE 7. Mary Lamb. The lives of the brother and sister are so bound together, that the illustrations of their joint life afforded by this essay (*Mackery End, in Hertfordshire*) and that on *Old China*, are of singular interest. They show us the brighter and happier intervals of that life, without which indeed it could hardly have been borne for those eight-and-thirty years. In 1805, during one of Mary Lamb's periodical attacks of mania, and consequent absences from home, Charles writes: 'I am a fool bereft of her coöperation. I am used to look up to her in the least and biggest perplexities. To say all that I find her would be more than, I think, anybody could possibly understand. She is older, wiser, and better than I am; and all my wretched imperfections I cover to myself by thinking on her goodness.' Compare also the sonnet written by Charles in one of his "lucid intervals" when himself in confinement, in 1796, ending with the words, —

"— the mighty debt of love I owe,
Mary, to thee, my sister and my friend." A.

NOTE 8. Francis Beaumont (1584–1616) and John Fletcher (1579–1625) wrote their dramas (13) in collaboration.

NOTE 9. An old bookshop at No. 20, Great Russell Street.

NOTE 10. Lamb was living in 1823 in a cottage in Islington, a borough in the north of London.

NOTE 11. Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), the famous Italian painter, architect, and sculptor.

NOTE 12. A connoisseur whose house at 14, Pall Mall East was a famous art centre. A sale of his engravings, rare editions, autographs, etc., took place at Christie's in 1829. Cf. note 17, *My Relations*.

NOTE 13. Ten miles north of London in Middlesex.

NOTE 14. Fourteen miles north of London.

NOTE 15. Twelve miles north of London in Essex.

NOTE 16. Izaak Walton (1593–1683), author of *The Compleat Angler*. Piscator and Viator, two characters in the book, meet at Trout Hall. The Lea is a branch of the Thames.

NOTE 17. Two comedies by George Colman (1762–1836).

NOTE 18. John Bannister (1760–1836); Mrs. Bland, a popular actress in the early part of the nineteenth century.

NOTE 19. A comedy by Thomas Morton (1764–1838).

NOTE 20. In *As You Like It*; in *Twelfth Night*.

NOTE 21. From the *New Year* by Charles Cotton (1630–1687), an English poet. He added *A Second Part: On Fly Fishing* to Walton's *Compleat Angler*.

NOTE 22. A king of Lydia (6th century B. c.), of fabulous wealth.

NOTE 23. Rothschild, the founder of the famous banking house.

POPULAR FALLACIES

(*The New Monthly Magazine*, January to September, 1826.)

NOTE 1. Lamb writes to Wordsworth in 1833, when the volume was newly out: "I want you in the *Popular Fallacies* to like the 'home that is no home,' and 'rising with the lark.'" The former of these naturally interested Lamb deeply, for it contains a hardly-disguised account of his own struggles with the crowd of loungers and good-natured friends who intruded in his leisure hours, and hindered his reading and writing. There is little to call for a note in these papers. The pun of Swift's criticised — with rare acumen — in the Fallacy, "that the worst puns are the best," was on a lady's mantua dragging to the ground a Cremona violin. Swift is said to have quoted Virgil's line —

"Mantua vae miserae nimium vicina Cremonae." A.

NOTE 2. Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*, a favorite book of Lamb's.

NOTE 3. See note 1.

NOTE 4. The bony charger of Don Quixote.

NOTE 5. A famous race horse descended from the Darley Arabian who was never beaten.

NOTE 6. Cf. Note 6, *Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist*.

NOTE 7. That is, the game laws.

NOTE 8. Cf. Lamb's *The First Tooth* (or was it by Mary Lamb?) in *Poetry for Children*.

NOTE 9. His own home. Cf. Lamb's letter to Mrs. Wordsworth, February 18, 1818.

NOTE 10. Cf. Ecclesiastes ix, 10.

NOTE 11. Paolo and Francesca. Cf. *The Divine Comedy*, Canto V.

NOTE 12. Jeremy Taylor (d. 1667), author of *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*.

NOTE 13. Nebuchadnezzar. Cf. Daniel ii. *Lucas*.

NOTE 14. A Greek poet of the eighth century B. c., author of *Works and Days* and *Theogony*.

NOTE 15. A half-historical, half-legendary Gaelic bard of the third century: the authorship of Macpherson's *Fingal* (1760–1763) was falsely ascribed to him.

NOTE 16. These lines are from the Apologetical Dialogue at the end of Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*. *Lucas*.

NOTE 17. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, V, ll. 153 ff.

NOTE 18. Cf. Taylor's *Holy Dying*, I, iii.

NOTE 19. Cf. Milton's *Il Penseroso*, ll. 83, 84.



The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

IN THE RIVERSIDE LITERATURE SERIES

* indicates the years in which the book is required "for reading."
 "s" indicates those in which it is required "for study."

NUMBER	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911
132. Arnold. Sohrab and Rustum ⁶				*	*	*
— Bacon. Essays. ² (<i>Preparing</i>).....				*	*	*
115. Browning. Poems ⁶ (selected).....				*	*	*
109. Bunyan. Pilgrim's Progress, Part I ²				*	*	*
100. Burke. Speech on Conciliation.....	s	s	s	s	s	s
128. Byron. Poems ⁶ (selected).....				*	*	*
105. Carlyle. Essay on Burns ⁸				s	s	s
166. Carlyle. Heroes and Hero Worship ⁶				*	*	*
135. Chaucer. Prologue ⁸				*	*	*
80. Coleridge. Ancient Mariner ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
164. De Quincey. Joan of Arc, and The English Mail-Coach ⁶				*	*	*
161. Dickens. Tale of Two Cities ⁴				*	*	*
83. Eliot. Silas Marner ⁴	*	*	*	*	*	*
42, 130, 131. Emerson. Essays ⁶ (selected).....				*	*	*
19-20. Franklin. Autobiography ²				*	*	*
68. Goldsmith. Deserted Village ⁸				*	*	*
78. Goldsmith. Vicar of Wakefield ⁴				*	*	*
91. Hawthorne. House of Seven Gables ⁴				*	*	*
155. Irving. Life of Goldsmith.....	*	*	*			
51-52. Irving. Sketch Book ⁶ (selections).....				*	*	*
79. Lamb's Essays of Elia ⁶ (selected).....				*	*	*
2. Longfellow. Miles Standish ⁶				*	*	*
30. Lowell. Vision of Sir Launfal ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
104. Macaulay. Essay on Addison.....	s	s	s			
45. Macaulay. Lays of Ancient Rome ⁶				*	*	*
102. Macaulay. Life of Johnson ⁸	s	s	s	s	s	s
72. Milton. L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, etc.....	s	s	s	s	s	s
119. Poe. Poems ⁶ (selected).....				*	*	*
147. Pope. Rape of the Lock ⁸				*	*	*
142. Ruskin. Sesame and Lilies (selections) ⁶				*	*	*
86. Scott. Ivanhoe ⁴	*	*	*	*	*	*
53. Scott. Lady of the Lake ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
165. Scott. Quentin Durward ⁴				*	*	*
93. Shakespeare. As You Like It ¹				*	*	*
163. Shakespeare. Henry V ¹				*	*	*
67. Shakespeare. Julius Cæsar ¹	s	s	s	*	*	*
106. Shakespeare. Macbeth.....	*	*	*	s	s	s
55. Shakespeare. Merchant of Venice ¹	*	*	*	*	*	*
149. Shakespeare. Twelfth Night ¹				*	*	*
60-61. Sir Roger de Coverley Papers ²	*	*	*	*	*	*
160. Spenser. Faerie Queene, Book I ⁸				*	*	*
156. Tennyson. Gareth and Lynette, etc. ⁶	*	*	*	*	*	*
140. Thackeray. Henry Esmond ⁴				*	*	*
24. Washington. Farewell Address ⁷				s	s	s
56. Webster. 1st Bunker Hill Oration ⁷				s	s	s

The following Requirements for 1909-1911 are not published in the Riverside Literature Series: *Palgrave's Golden Treasury*, 1st Series, Bks. II and III,⁸ Bk. IV,⁶ *Mrs. Gaskell's Cranford*,⁴ *Blackmore's Lorna Doone*.⁴

¹, ⁴, ⁵, ⁶ Two from each group to be selected for reading, 1909-1911.

², ³ One from each group to be selected for reading, 1909-1911.

⁷ These two are an alternate for Burke's Speech, 1909-1911.

⁸ One to be selected for study, 1909-1911.

